

Lebanese protest official's kidnapping

BEIRUT (R) — Thousands of Christians rallied in Beirut Thursday to protest the abduction nine days ago of a top official of Lebanon's largest Christian party. The Falange, one of several Christian groups that in August boycotted the country's general elections, said the kidnapping of parliament member Boutros Khawand was an attempt to weaken Christian opposition to the Syrian-backed polls. Demonstrators carrying red-and-white Lebanese flags marched to the Ministry of Justice in the Christian Asrafiyeh suburb led by Falange chief George Saadeh, party officials and several deputies, amid tight security by army and police. Mr. Saadeh handed justice minister Nasri Ma'alouf a letter protesting the kidnapping of the 53-year-old Khawand who was snatched by gunmen on Sept. 15. Ten gunmen in two vehicles seized Mr. Khawand as he left his home in east Beirut then sped off to an unknown destination. No group has claimed responsibility for the abduction. The Falange, formed in 1936 by the late Pierre Gemayel, has launched a wide campaign to press leaders, including President Elias Hrawi, to secure Mr. Khawand's release.



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Mellor resigns from cabinet

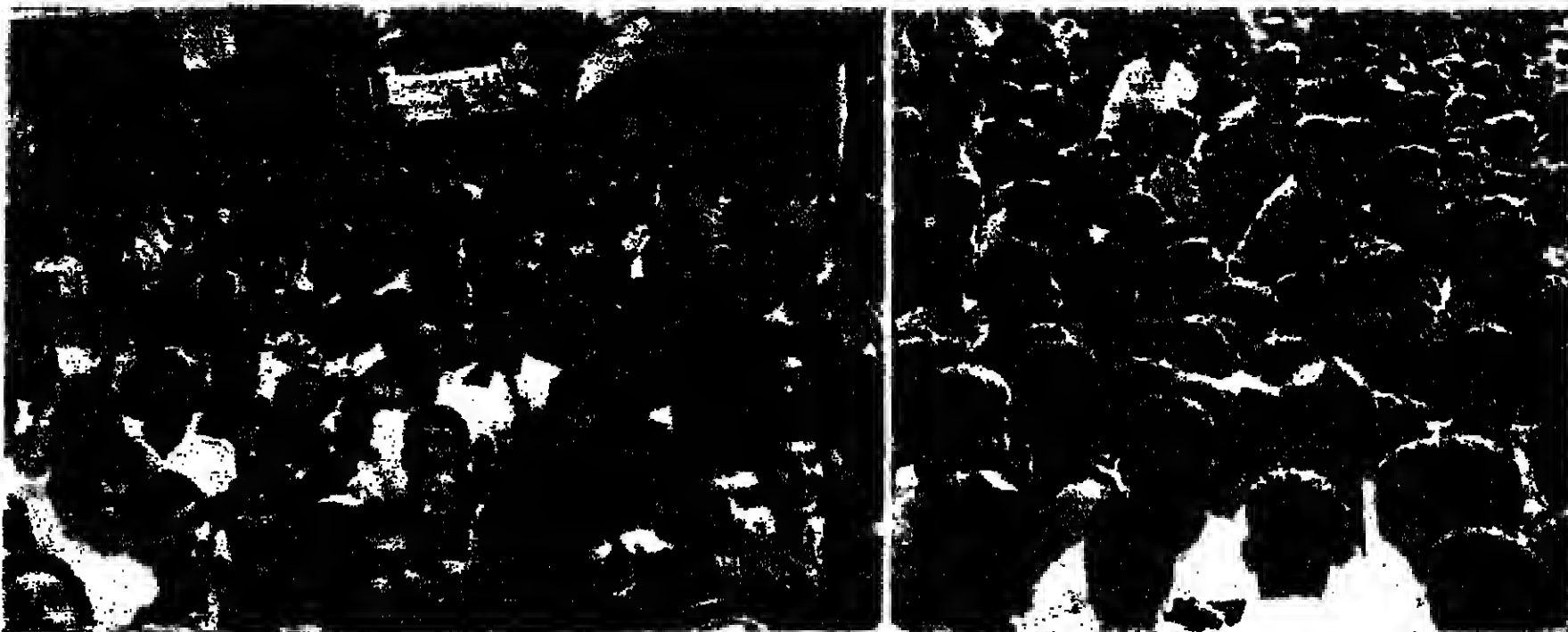
LONDON (AP) — David Mellor, a close friend of Prime Minister John Major, resigned from the cabinet Thursday, his career battered by an affair with an actress and a friendship with the daughter of an official of the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO). Mr. Mellor, 43, who as national heritage secretary was among the brightest stars of Mr. Major's 22-member cabinet, had tried to turn a three-month battle to keep his job into a trial of strength with Britain's tabloid newspapers. Press regulation is one of the responsibilities of his department, which was created this year. Two years ago, as a home office official, he warned Britain's free-wheeling, intrusive tabloids that they were "drinking in the last chance saloon." Much of the controversy over the press involved coverage of the royal family, which has recently included transcripts of a telephone conversation allegedly involving Princess Diana, and pictures of the Duchess of York snubbing topics with an American friend. Mr. Mellor quit a day after making a last-ditch defence in television interviews and before a press group Wednesday night.

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Million turn out for King's homecoming



Unprecedented outpour of emotions greets His Majesty

By Suhair Obeidat
and P.V. Vivekanand

AMMAN — Over a million Jordanians thronged the streets of Amman Thursday to extend a jubilant, boisterous and emotional welcome to His Majesty King Hussein in a euphoric celebration unprecedented in the Kingdom's recent history.

Men and women danced on the streets to the tune of nationalist lyrics while elderly tribesmen watched from makeshift tents set up on the roadsides as a sea of black, white and red national colour descended on the streets leading from Marka airport on a motorcade route winding through downtown, Jabal Amman, the Sports City and Jabal Hussein to the Royal Palace.

Royal family members, government and Parliament leaders, tribal chiefs, Armed Forces officers and diplomatic corps gathered in a decorated hangar at the airport to greet the King, who piloted his Tri-Star to a smooth touchdown at exactly 3 p.m. with Her Majesty Queen Noor sitting behind him in the cockpit.

Some of the 16 jetfighters which flew escort to the royal plane as soon as it entered Jordanian airspace went into a series of aerobatics and painted the Jordanian flag in the sky as the King, looking fit and healthy, stepped down from the plane.

As mosque minarets lit up and church bells rang out in unison, the King embraced members of the Royal family, some of whom wept openly.

Some of the King's 11 children were with him as he flew in; others, along with His Royal Highness Prince Mohammad, His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, Her Royal Highness Princess Basma and their families, were at the airport to receive him.

As cannons boomed a 21-gun salute, the King inspected a guard of honour to the music of the Armed Forces band, and then proceeded to the reception hangar, where he shook hands with about 400 dignitaries, including present and former ministers, Parliament members, senior Armed Forces and police officers and diplomats, who greeted him with a standing ovation.

The high point of the national celebrations marking the King's return was a three-and-a-half hour drive through the streets of Amman in a silver Mercedes car with Crown Prince Hassan at its wheel and showered with flowers on many spots.

The royal car, accompanied by bright-red army escort vehicles while three helicopters hovered overhead, was met with an outpour of emotions — ululation, songs and cheers — every step of the way.

At one point, Chief Chamberlain Prince Raad Ben Zeid abandoned his car and joined the men and women dancing to the tune of the popular "Hashemi Hashemi" song, referring to the King's ancestry, which goes back to the Prophet Mohammad.

The King stopped briefly at Zahran Palace to greet her Majesty the Queen Mother Zein.

Security men kept a tight cordon along the streets, but were unable to hold back the crowds surging forward for a close look at the Monarch, who, halfway through the drive, climbed onto the bonnet of the car. Dozens of security men surrounded him, but were waved aside by the King. Many had to be content with running alongside the car in a tight knot.

At several spots, crowds surged forward to shake the hand of the King, creating nightmares for the security men.

Many senior officials who normally are driven opted to drive themselves; among them was the chief of police himself, Major General Fadel Ali Fheid.

For the first time that anyone could remember in Jordan, security forces stood by as many fired.

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Not simply a welcome but a resounding oath of allegiance

By Nurmeeen Murad
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The rousing welcome and euphoric celebration that greeted His Majesty King Hussein upon his return to home Thursday was not only a sign of his huge personal popularity among Jordanians but was also a clear indication that he remains by far the biggest and most respected political institution in the country, according to observers and analysts.

The spontaneous turnout of an estimated one million Jordanians to greet the King Thursday could only be used as a yardstick of King Hussein's popularity among Jordanians, these analysts say, adding that no event in

Jordan's history has galvanised as many people as the King's recovery and homecoming has done.

Political analysts in particular were keen to point out that the King's popularity will prove to be the needed umbrella under which the work of political parties will be organised and under which all political differences will be solved.

"It was apparent that whether belonging to Islamist, leftist or centrist traditionalist political ideologies there seems to be consensus over the King possessing the higher political ground among the great majority of Jordanians," an analyst said. "It's like a new national character."

"This is a national pleb-

site on Hashemite rule in which the population declared that Al Hussein is the solution," Minister of Labour Abdul Karim Kabariti said in an apparent stab at the motto of the biggest and best organised Muslim Brotherhood movement — "Islam is the solution."

Another senior official agreed that the turnout had political significance but said that King's political influence in the country cannot be compared to that of political parties in the country because "he is above it all."

Analysts agree that the King does serve as a unifying source for all Jordanians and is a symbol of that unity rather than a standard for comparison among political forces. They also point out

that the "vote of allegiance" that the King received Thursday was added proof of his success as "father" of his Jordanian family, a concept that the King himself has time and again highlighted in his addresses to the nation.

"The King is the father to all those parties," said the senior official. "He is the father of the opposition in as much as he is the father of those who are mainstream."

Many analysts also point out to the factors that led to this huge political popularity for the King include the introduction of democracy and his position during the Gulf crisis.

The fact that this tumultuous welcome by the Jordanian people for their leader came three years after the

introduction of democracy could only indicate how positively it was received and how much it is appreciated by the people, according to officials and analysts alike.

"This atmosphere proves the advantage of democracy and is the first of its fruits," said another senior official echoing the thoughts of many analysts who also believed that the people "turned out at the first opportunity to thank him and to tell him that they love him for all he had done for them," as one analyst put it.

"To the background knowledge that people were not forced to come out to the streets by any invisible hand one can only say that Thursday's turnout was historic," said a seasoned analyst.

Zayed, Assad discuss island dispute; Eagleburger says issue could be serious

DAMASCUS (Agencies) — The president of the United Arab Emirates (UAE) arrived Thursday for talks with leaders of Syria, which is trying to mediate a dispute between Iran and the UAE over islands in the strategic Strait of Hormuz.

Sheikh Zayed Ben Sultan Al Nahayan, who is also the ruler of Abu Dhabi, was received at Damascus airport by President Hafez Al Assad and was driven to Tishrin Palace where the two began talks.

He flew from Alexandria, Egypt, where he held talks with President Hosni Mubarak about the islands of Abu Musa and the Greater and Lesser Tunbs in the mouth of the oil-rich Gulf.

The Arab League, of which both countries are members, has condemned Iran's declaration earlier this month of sole sovereignty over Abu Musa.

Iranian President Hashemi Rafsanjani last week told Syrian

Foreign Minister Farouk Al Sharaa, who was visiting Tehran, that Iran would not drop its claim to Abu Musa.

But Mr. Sharaa's Iranian counterpart, Ali Akbar Velayati, said he believed the dispute could be settled through negotiation. Iran announced Wednesday it would send a Foreign Ministry official to Abu Dhabi early next week to negotiate.

U.S. acting Secretary of State Lawrence Eagleburger, concerned that the dispute over the island could get out of hand, Wednesday warned that the issue could become "very serious" if Iran resorted to force.

"I don't think there is any question that the issue could become very serious if the Iranians were to decide to resort to force," he said at the start of talks with Kuwaiti Foreign Minister Sheikh Salim Al Sabah Al Salem.

Mr. Eagleburger reiterated what his aides had said privately

about telling members of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), Tuesday that the United States believes the dispute "should be settled peacefully and we're totally opposed to the use of force."

Tehran virtually annexed Abu Musa earlier this year, raising Arab-Iranian tensions in a region that straddled two thirds of the world's oil reserves.

The two countries shared control of Abu Musa under a 1971 agreement that allowed Iran to set up a garrison on the island that was until then controlled solely by Sharjah, one of seven lower Gulf Arab sheikhdoms that later formed the UAE.

Mr. Eagleburger's statement, and earlier comments by his aides, seemed intended to increase pressure for peaceful settlement of the dispute ahead of the expected meeting on Sunday in Abu Dhabi of negotiators from

U.S. plans to seek U.N. seizure of Iraqi assets

WASHINGTON (Agencies) — The Bush administration, believing the Iraqi government of President Saddam Hussein is growing weaker, plans to get a U.N. resolution in the coming days seizing billions of dollars in Iraqi assets, according to U.S. officials.

The resolution would let the United Nations use Iraqi money to monitor the destruction of Iraq's weapons programmes and provide fuel to Iraqi dissidents, said a senior administration official.

It will likely be adopted by the U.N. Security Council before the end of the month, said the official who spoke only on condition of anonymity.

The administration hopes the resolution will further erode Baghdad's control, which its analysts say has already slipped significantly this summer.

Among the setbacks cited by U.S. officials is the ban on Iraqi flights over the southern part of

the country, a crackdown on smuggling into Iraq that is hurting the country's already crippled economy, and the low-level Shiite insurgency in the south that diverts government troops and precious financial resources.

The United States had been pushing for the resolution since the spring, but encountered massive legal and technical problems as well as concerns from members of the 15-nation Security Council.

Following are the main points in the U.S. draft of the resolution.

1. States should transfer to a U.N. escrow fund proceeds from Iraqi-owned oil sales for which payment was frozen after sanctions were imposed on Baghdad on Aug. 4, 1990.

2. Any country holding Iraqi-owned oil whose sales have been barred by sanctions is to purchase it, or ensure it is sold at fair

Bilaterals end with hopes for progress in next round

WASHINGTON (AP) — The sixth round of Arab-Israeli talks ended Thursday, and the two sides said they finally got to the issues which have fuelled 44 years of hostility.

"For the first time the parties became engaged," said Israel's top negotiator with Syria, Itamar Rabinovich. "We dove into deep water, into the main issues," he said.

Significant differences remain, he added, but the atmosphere and tone of the talks were "infinitely better than before."

All four sets of Arab-Israeli talks will resume Oct. 21, he said. Negotiators from both sides say this was the first time since the talks began in October in which the sides engaged in a real negotiation.

"There are glimmers of progress," a senior administration official said Wednesday. "We've done some crawling and maybe some tentative walking," he said, "but there's still a long way to go."

Negotiators attributed the movement to the new Israeli posture adopted by the left-leaning government that last July replaced the hardline administration of former Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir.

Nonetheless, all expressed frustration with the gaps between their positions and predicted a long and difficult negotiation remained.

"But don't take it that way as pessimistic, don't take it that the discussions so far were not useful," said Syrian spokeswoman Bushra Kanafani. "The peace process is very complicated and the issues at hand are of great importance. So we should use some patience," she said.

Despite the useful discussion of each side's position, she said, Israel continued to reject Syria's demand for a total withdrawal from the Golan Heights.

Israel has promised to return to

the negotiating table next month with a new formulation of its position regarding withdrawal, she said.

"There are elements of agreement ... and that is something I am very pleased about," she said.

Any agreement revolves mostly around each side's acceptance of the other's legitimate security concerns and a recognition that include Israel and all its Arab neighbours, Ms. Kanafani said.

Syria also appears to be offering ideas to advance the talks.

"I don't want to raise, any euphoria," a senior Bush administration official said Wednesday. But he told reporters in New York that "we've heard something interesting" from Foreign Minister Farouk Sharaa during his meeting with Acting Secretary of State Lawrence Eagleburger. He said it would be conveyed to Israel.

Israel was nonetheless disappointed that Syria rejected a meeting between the two countries' leaders. "I'm afraid that today the negotiations are simply too narrow, too low," said Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres on the Public Broadcasting Service's Macneil-Lehrer Newshour.

Mr. Rabin, not satisfied with Mr. Sharaa's statement that his country wants total peace, has said President Hafez Al Assad himself must make the commitment.

On Wednesday, Mr. Sharaa seemed to say the words Mr. Rabin has demanded before he will allow Israel's negotiators to discuss territorial concessions on the Golan Heights.

"We are willing for total peace, for total withdrawal from the occupied Arab territories. Our sincerity is not questionable. You can ask the Israelis and they know it," he told reporters in New York.

But Mr. Rabin, speaking to reporters in Tel Aviv, said he needed more: "I would like to

hear it in specific terms from the Syrians' highest authority.

"Not only from Hafez Al Assad, the president of Syria, but even more so that the president will say it to his own people — and that the peace treaty stands on its own two feet," Mr. Rabin said (see related story on page 2).

Mr. Rabin insists Israel will not discuss territorial concessions on the Golan unless Syria wants full peace, including diplomatic ties. He also demands that negotiations with Syria not be linked to those of other Arab parties.

Talks between Israel and representatives of the 1.7 million Palestinians in the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip also made some headway, albeit minor.

In addition to the formal sessions between the two sides, small groups of negotiators have begun meeting informally to discuss the goal of the talks and the nature of the interim self-government being offered by Israel, as well as Israeli restrictions on the movement of Palestinian delegates.

Israel hopes these informal discussions will evolve into working groups that will negotiate various aspects of Palestinian self-rule, such as education, the judicial system and taxes.

In talks with Lebanon, which began in frigidly, the atmosphere during the round improved sufficiently for Israel to request information about a missing airman shot down over Lebanon in 1986.

Lebanon responded earlier this week, saying it had reason to believe he was alive.

Chief Jordanian negotiator Abdul Salam Majali said the Jordanian and Israeli sides did not reach any agreement on the issues of refugees and security which were discussed in the last two days of the sixth round.

Dr. Majali said this round, the longest of all rounds so far since it

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Syrian talk of total peace arouses Israel's interest

By Sami Aboudi
Reuters

WASHINGTON — A Syrian statement that it wanted "total peace" with Israel aroused intense Israeli interest after an otherwise fruitless session of Middle East negotiations.

The statement in New York by Syrian Foreign Minister Farouk Al Sharaa was seen as a possible break in the negotiations which have been stalled on the key issue of the future of the Israeli-occupied Golan Heights.

The talks recessed Thursday because of the Jewish new year and will probably resume on Oct. 21.

"We are willing for total peace... for total withdrawal from the occupied Arab territories," Mr. Sharaa said at the start of talks with Acting Secretary of State Lawrence Eagleburger. Both men are attending the U.N. General Assembly.

Israel has been demanding a Syrian pledge to make "full peace," including exchanging ambassadors and open borders with the Jewish state, before discussing Damascus's demand for a complete withdrawal from the strategic Golan Heights.

Israel's chief negotiator, Itamar Rabinovich, said Mr. Sharaa's statement could be a positive development, though

it needed elaboration. He said Israel would be listening carefully to Mr. Sharaa's speech to the general assembly next Monday.

"My curiosity has certainly been aroused by the word 'total,' particularly when applied to the word 'peace,'" Mr. Rabinovich said.

"But we don't need to always bang on to a couple of words. Both parties have ways and means of amplifying and I look forward to further amplification of what might be a positive direction," he said.

Syria's chief negotiator, Mouwafiq Al Allaf, seemed to take the concept a touch further. Asked what Syria meant by the term "total peace," he

said: "All that contributes to make the peace genuine and complete — not partial peace, not a peace that is only on paper but peace which is in reality between the two sides and also for all other states and peoples in the region."

The talks themselves continued to mark time, after beginning a month ago with high expectations, they seem to be petering out with little apparent progress.

Syria and Israel appeared close last week to discussing Israeli withdrawal from the Golan. But Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin, instructed his team to refrain from getting into details, insisting that

Damascus must first spell out the kind of peace it is willing to offer the Jewish state.

Mr. Rabin favours withdrawal from parts of the Golan, which Israel occupied in the 1967 Middle East war, but rejects Syria's demands for full withdrawal.

Syria says it is not willing to make peace with Israel without receiving all its territory.

Mr. Rabinovich acknowledged that support within Israel for a Golan withdrawal appeared to be fading and suggested this was because the Israeli public was disappointed by what it saw as the unyielding Syrian position in the talks.

Parallel Palestinian-Israeli negotiations for an interim

period of self-rule for the nearly two million Palestinians in the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip are also winding down with little progress.

On Monday Palestinian negotiators proposed discussion of issues extracted from agendas presented by both sides earlier.

But they are still pressing for an Israeli commitment to U.N. resolutions 242 and 338, which embody the principle of exchanging land for peace.

Israel says the resolution is irrelevant in the context of talks on an interim solution and should be left to later negotiations to decide the final status of the territories.

Bomb explodes near U.S. embassy in Sanaa

SANAA (R) — A bomb blew up near the U.S. embassy, causing no casualties, in the latest in a wave of blasts in Yemen's capital, the official newspaper Al Thawra said on Thursday.

An interior ministry official quoted by Al Thawra said the bomb exploded near the western wall of the embassy compound on Wednesday night. He said there were no casualties.

A series of explosions and attacks against several senior Yemeni officials, especially those from the formerly Marxist south, have taken place in recent months.

Two weeks ago the Yemeni cabinet gave security forces 10 days to track down those behind the attacks. No arrests have been officially announced.

Yemen's presidential council, which met three weeks ago to discuss the security situation, accused unnamed "criminal elements" of seeking to destabilize the country's peace and security.

Amnesty accuses Sudan of executing civilians

CAIRO, Egypt (AP) — Amnesty International accused Sudan's military government on Wednesday of secretly and summarily executing hundreds of civilians in the rebel-besieged southern town of Juba.

"Government forces are reported to have deliberately killed at least 300 unarmed civilians and prisoners and, to have arrested hundreds of others," the London-based organisation said.

It said many of those detained have disappeared. "With reports of bodies seen floating in the White Nile, there is considerable concern that detainees have been secretly and extra-judicially executed," the report said.

Juba, the army's main garrison town in the south, has lived under siege by the rebel Sudan People's Liberation Army for four years.

The town's 400,000 residents, 70 per cent of them displaced by the civil war, depend totally on airlifted relief food. But food flights are sporadic due to the lack of security around Juba, 1200 kilometres south of the capital Khartoum.

Amnesty International urged Sudan's Muslim fundamentalist military government "to take immediate action to end human rights violations."

The report did not mention the reported execution on spying charges of Andrew Tombe, 34, a Sudanese employee in Juba of the U.S. Agency for International Development. The United States expressed outrage over Tombe's reported death and demanded an explanation from Khartoum.

A spokesman at the Sudanese embassy in Cairo denied the charges in the Amnesty International report, which was released in London and faxed to the Associated Press in Cairo.

"I deny it 100 per cent," said Salah Mohammad Ibrahim. "The army is locked in confrontation with the rebels outside of Juba. These military operations are not targeting civilians, because the armed forces are there to protect them."

Mr. Ibrahim said proof that the report is false is that thousands of southerners are fleeing their homes in rebel areas to government-held regions of the north.

"If the army was killing them, they wouldn't seek its protection from the rebels," Mr. Ibrahim said.

Kuwaiti diplomat shot, wounded

PRAGUE, Czechoslovakia (AP) — A Kuwaiti diplomat was shot in the belly and shoulder early Thursday and is hospitalised in Prague, Cstsk, the official news agency, reported.

According to the report, an unspecified number of shots were fired at diplomatic attaché Salah Yaser Al Mubarak in front of his apartment early Thursday.

The culprit, who were not identified, fled from the scene, Cstsk said.

Physicians at the Thomayer Hospital in Prague said the patient's condition was "prop- orionate to the nature of his injury" and confirmed the diplomat was shot in the belly and shoulder.

Mr. Al Mubarak is likely to remain hospitalised for two to three weeks, barring unforeseen complications, doctors said.

Cstsk, quoting reliable sources, identified the weapon as a special Czech-made 7.65mm handgun with a silencer, used formerly by the communist secret police STB.

Spokesmen of the Kuwaiti embassy in Prague had no immediate comment on the situation, citing ongoing investigation of the case.

Italian officials end Iraq visit

BAGHDAD (R) — A group of Italian political and humanitarian figures has left Iraq a three-day visit aimed at breaking down the country's post-Gulf war isolation.

Robert Formigoni, a Christian Democrat member of parliament, told reporters on Wednesday evening that while they had been "in a way, breaking the embargo" the visit was "something that should be followed by all governments."

Mr. Formigoni's group consisted of six members of parliament and 34 members of Italian political and humanitarian groups who favour the lifting of United Nations sanctions imposed after Iraq's conquest of Kuwait on Aug. 2, 1992.

They also brought four dancers who performed at Iraqi music festival.

Mr. Formigoni, who is also a member of the European Parliament, met high-ranking Iraqi officials including Deputy Prime Minister Tariq Aziz.

Israel torturing Palestinian woman

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (R) — A human rights group accused Israel Wednesday of torturing a Palestinian guerrilla, the first woman leader captured during the intifada.

The Paris-based Association for the Defence of Human Rights and Freedom in the Arab World demanded Abir Al Wahidi, 23, be tried in public or released.

Ms. Wahidi is suspected of leading an armed cell of the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) that shot dead a Jewish settler in the occupied West Bank last year.

The Israeli press portrayed her as a beautiful woman who used her charm to get through Israeli checkpoints.

"Her jailers endanger her life by preventing her from sleeping for 20 days so they can illegally draw confessions from her. In addition, she is subjected daily to various inhuman and degrading forms of torture which seriously threaten her life," the group said in a statement released Wednesday.

An Israeli human rights group closely monitoring Ms. Wahidi's case agreed she had been tortured but said her interrogation had now ended.

The women for women political prisoners group said Ms. Wahidi had been held for nearly two months in extremely harsh conditions in a Shm Bet secret police interrogation ward.

But she was recently transferred from Jerusalem's Russian compound police lock-up to a women's prison in central Israel.

"In the course of her interrogation she spent time in Shabeh (hands bound behind one's back and a stinking sack over the head) in the coffin (cell to small that one can neither stand nor stretch one's legs sitting) and seated in a small chair with her hand bound behind her," the Israeli group said.

Russian submarines for Iran

LONDON (R) — The first of up to three Russian submarines sold to Iran, despite U.S. protests, set sail for the Gulf this week, BBC television said on Thursday.

The Iranian navy has bought the diesel-powered Kilo submarines, which senior Pentagon officials fear could threaten the stability of vital oil export routes through the Gulf.

The British Broadcasting Corporation showed what it said were secretly filmed pictures of one of the submarines at a Russian naval base in Latvia, where Iranian crews were thought to have been training for the past year.

Latvia's Deputy Defence Minister Danis Turhais said: "At the same time as the Russians want to become part of Europe and he allies of the West, and claim common interest with the West and claim to be opposed to aggression, they are again providing terrorist weapons of unforeseen magnitude to the Iranians."

The New York Times on Thursday quoted Pentagon officials as saying that with the purchase of two or three of the submarines Iran would become the first nation in the Gulf with the craft.

"This will introduce a significant kind of warfare that has been absent from the region," one official was quoted as saying.

"When you look at the countries around the Persian Gulf, you could end up with some kind of domino effect."

The deal is one of a number of arms sales to Iran by Russia which

PLO opposes integration in Lebanon

TUNIS (R) — The PLO said on Thursday it opposed any integration of Palestinian refugees in Lebanon.

A Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) spokesman in Tunis said the estimated 500,000 refugees in Lebanon were only guests who would return home after a solution with Israel was found.

Several Lebanese politicians and commentators have spoken of plans to settle Palestinians in Lebanon by granting them the Lebanese nationality.

A Shiite Muslim religious leader, Sheikh Mohammad Mehdi Shamseddine, said earlier this month Palestinians in Lebanon should be integrated into Lebanese society just like Armenians.

Lebanon's Armenians bold Lebanese nationality but keep their own culture identity.

"Statements and articles talking about the integration of Palestinians in Lebanon have frightened recently... the PLO was and is still constantly rejecting such offers," said the spokesman, quoted by the Palestinian news agency Wafa.

Abu Nidal activist wounded

In Sidon, South Lebanon, an activist of Abu Nidal's Fateh Revolutionary Council was critically wounded Thursday when a bomb planted under his car seat exploded as he turned on the ignition, security sources said.

One source, speaking on condition of anonymity, said the bomb went off at 12.30 p.m. (0930 GMT) in the port city of Sidon, severing one of Mr. Rashid's legs.

Mr. Rashid, who fled from PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat's Fateh mainstream PLO group

Eagleburger: Jordan strongly committed to peace

NEW YORK (USIA) — The Middle East peace process was one of the major themes discussed during Acting Secretary of State Lawrence Eagleburger's bilateral talks here with the foreign ministers of Jordan and Israel, a senior State Department official told reporters.

Jordan's role in the Middle East peace process was discussed extensively and there was an "in-depth discussion" of the Israeli-Jordanian negotiations, the U.S. official said. Foreign Minister Kamel Abu Jaber of Jordan made "a very strong commitment" to stay at the negotiating table, and he agreed on the need to make progress as soon as possible and to have tangible signs of progress in the peace process, the U.S. official said.

"We underscored to the Jordanians the need to make real progress and that all sides have to demonstrate, quite frankly, maximum flexibility," the official said, adding "each side has a responsibility and a role in that."

Iraq was also a topic of discussion in Mr. Eagleburger's meeting with the Jordanian minister. They discussed bilateral relations as well, the U.S. official said.

"Jordan's enforcement of the sanctions against Iraq has definitely improved," the official said, and there are indications "this is a sustainable position on the part of the Jordanian government."

"We're encouraging King Hussein — we're encouraging his key advisers — to maintain the most effective sanctions regime that they can. That's a policy to be encouraged," the senior U.S. official emphasised.

The issue of U.S. assistance, including military aid, was discussed and "under serious consideration," the official said, adding he was unable to provide details. More than \$50 million per year in U.S. assistance was suspended because of Jordan's support for Iraq in the Gulf war.

Mr. Eagleburger also met separately with Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres. The senior U.S. official said U.S.-Israeli bilateral relations "have reached a point where there is great satisfaction on both sides."

They discussed Israel's request for \$10,000 million in U.S. housing loan guarantees, but did not get into details on the issue, the official said. They also reviewed strategic military cooperation, across-the-board economic discussions and high-level exchanges between the two sides.

There was "an extensive discussion" of the multilateral phase of the Middle East peace process, including how those talks should be moved forward, the U.S. official said. However, Israel's reluctance to attend talks on refugee matters was not resolved, he said.

Mr. Eagleburger underscored "the need for making progress in the peace process, especially in the bilateral," the official said.

Prior to their talks, Mr. Peres told reporters that Israel had no reservations about the U.S. role in the peace talks, praising the United States for making face-to-face negotiations possible and for encouraging the parties to make real progress.

Iraq opens Babylon Festival

BABYLON, Iraq (R) — Amid the beating of drums and sounds of traditional music, Iraq's culture and information minister Tuesday opened an arts music festival.

As thousands of spectators sang, danced and shouted anti-U.S. slogans at the opening of the Babylon festival, Hamad Youssef Hammadi vowed Iraqis would crush "avaricious enemies" heading towards the country from the "land of the Yankees."

"Iraq... with its glory and pride trample under its feet those covetous and malicious people coming from the land of AIDS, the land ruled by tyrant gangs of the Yankees," the minister said.

He said the United States was governed by "the suckers of the peoples' blood and plunderers of their wealth."

Mr. Hammadi, wearing olive fatigues, said the United States was a country without history and was full of vice and intrigues.

"The country is ruled by the most corrupt in the world, the vicious devils of technology, (people) who have lost all conscience," he said.

Iraq has revived the Babylon Festival after a two-year suspension, as a sign of defiance of the U.N. trade blockade and no-fly zones in the north and south of the country imposed by the United States and its Gulf war allies.

Posters of President Saddam Hussein and Nebuchadnezzar, the king who restored Babylon to glory more than 2,500 years ago, adorned the entrances to the ancient city.

In song and verse, President Saddam is compared to Nebuchadnezzar, who united what is present day Iraq and created an empire that included Syria, Jordan, Lebanon, Palestine and parts of Iran.

Asked what parallels there were between Nebuchadnezzar and President Saddam, Nouri Al Marsoumi, undersecretary of the Ministry of Culture and Information, said:

"Historically speaking, Nebuchadnezzar was the symbol of power, building... and justice. Saddam Hussein is (also) leader of building and symbol of power and justice."

Israeli military industries face hard times

By Bradley Burston
Reuters

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM — For many Israelis, the mushroom-shaped cloud that rose over a Tel Aviv suburb looked like the beginning of the end.

News that the massive explosion was only a munitions bunker that blew up accidentally was greeted with a general sigh of relief.

But for financially troubled Israel Military Industries (IMI) and a workforce long accustomed to job security in a country geared for arms-making and war, the black smoke over one of its plants was a bad omen.

"When the bunker blew up in July it felt like, looked like, the end of the world," said an IMI engineer after the blast.

The workers know, though, that for them the world will probably end not in the ammunition dumps but in the cabinet.

Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin's new government faces tough decisions on reviving IMI, along with other Israeli arms firms.

Finance Minister Abraham Shohat said slumping world arms sales meant even Israel Aircraft Industries, the only state-run defence company to show a profit last year, was "in trouble."

IMI is likely to face the axe first.

Yossi Nitzani, head of the government Companies Authority, said IMI's 1991 losses of \$239 million exceeded the total annual earnings of all profitable state-run companies combined.

"IMI has to undergo a very dramatic, very drastic recovery programme," he said. "And painful surgery will be needed to do this."

IMI blames much of its plight on the end of the cold war and drops in arms and munitions orders from Germany and other countries.

But Mr. Nitzani said IMI losses had been heavy for years before former Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir's government converted it in 1990 from an arm of the Defence Ministry to a state company, a move that allowed it to seek investment capital.

Dan Shomron, former army chief of staff and commander of Israel's 1976 Entebbe hostage rescue operation in Uganda, was tapped last year to lead IMI.

He has backed off in recent months from initial optimism over IMI's future.

IMI's attempts to break into civilian markets have met with little success. A project launched with bright hopes in 1989 to build prefabricated houses for an influx of immigrants foundered on housing ministry reluctance to order IMI units.

In any case, immigration dropped sharply in 1991 and the housing plant is expected to be closed in the coming weeks.

Mr. Shohat said in a newspaper interview that he and Mr. Rabin were in shock after seeing IMI's financial figures, and that the company was on the verge of collapse.

Mr. Shohat is to present a recovery programme next month. This is expected to specify line, concentration on high-tech ex-

JORDAN TELEVISION

Tel. 77311-19

PROGRAMME TWO

17:30La Maison Bleue

17:30Les Cies du Fort Boyard

19:00News in French

19:15Documentary Programme

19:30News in Hebrew

20:00News in Arabic

20:30Golden Girls

21:10The Good Guys

22:20News in English C.L.D.

PRAYER TIMES

06:04Fajr

06:21(Sunrise) Dhuhr

12:28Dhuhr

15:54'Asr

18:34Maghrib

19:52'Isha

CHURCHES

St. Mary of Nazareth Church Switich Tel. 810740

Assemblies of God Church, Tel. 632785

St. Joseph Church Tel. 624590

Church of the Annunciation Tel. 637443

De la Salle Church Tel. 661757

Terzianina Church Tel. 623566

Church of the Annunciation Tel. 623541

Anglican Church Tel. 623383, Tel. 628543

Athenian Catholic Church Tel. 771331

Armenian Orthodox Church Tel. 772581

St. Ephraim Church Tel. 771751

Assuan International Church Tel. 627981, 683326

Evangelical Lutheran Church Tel. 811205

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints Tel. 823824 and 654932

Church of the Nazarene Tel. 675691

WEATHER

Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology.

It will be partly cloudy and relatively calm, and there will be a chance for scattered showers of rain in the northern parts of Jordan. Winds will be westerly moderate to fresh, causing dust in desert areas. In Amman, it will be dusty and windy with be northerly fresh and sea choppy.

Min./max. temp.

Amman15 / 24

Aqaba12 / 26

Dahab20 / 31

Jordan Valley20 / 31

Yesterday's high temperatures: Amman 24, Aqaba 31. Humidity readings: Amman 64 per cent, Aqaba 36 per cent.

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

NIGHT DUTY

AMMAN:

Dr. Shabaneh Eiman752971

Dr. Salah Ali649028

Dr. Abdul Qadir Lala690048

Dr. Abbas Hakim891265

Fire Brigade891228

First pharmacy751321

Ferdous pharmacy783336

Al Asame pharmacy637025

Nabrook pharmacy623672

Al Sahan pharmacy636730

Yaseeb pharmacy644945

Shamsan pharmacy876660

Najib pharmacy847632

JERUSALEM:

Dr. Mohammad Ta'ul(-)

Al Sharaa' pharmacy(275825)

ZARQA:

Dr. Hussein Hussein997166

Razazi pharmacy993119

KARAK:

Dr. Zyad Shamsallah(-)

Mie no pharmacy352170

SALT:

Dr. Ziyad Emour(-)

Bar's pharmacy(-)

EMERGENCIES

Civil Defence Department661111

Civil Defence Immediate69341

Rescue192, 621111, 637777

Fire Brigade891228

Blood Bank775121

Highway Police643402

Traffic Police896390

Public Security Department603021

Hotel Complaints605800

Price Complaints661176

Water and Sewerage897467

Complaints787111

Amman Municipality787111

Complaints787111

Telephone Information121

Overseas Calls016230

Central Amman Telephone623101

Repairs623101

Abdali Telephone Repairs661101

Jordan Television771111

Radio Jordan774111

Water Authority680100

Jordan Electricity Authority815615

Electric Power Company636381

Rt Flight Information08-53200

Queen Alia Int. Airport08-53200

HOSPITALS

AMMAN:

Hussein Medical Centre813813/32

Khaldat Maternity, J. Amn642816/2

Jabal Amman Maternity642862

Malhas, J. Amman636140

Saladin, Shamsan664174

Shamsan Hospital669131

University Hospital843845

Al-Mascher Hospital66722/9

The Islamic, Amman666127/37

Al-Ahli, Amman664164/6

Italian, Al-Mudhaffar777101/3

Al-Basir, J. Ashrafiah775111/26

Army, Marja891611/15

Queen Alia Hospital602240/205

Amal Hospital674155

ZARQA:

Zarqa Govt. Hospital(09)983333

Zarqa National Hospital(09)903560

Rm Sana Hospital(09)987373

Al-Hana Modern Hospital(09)999090

EMERGENCIES:

Princess Basma Hospital(02)275353

Greek Catholic Hospital(02)272275

Ben Al Nafes Hospital.....(02)247100

AQABA:

Princess Haye Hospital.....(03)314111

FOR THE TRAVELLER

QUEEN ALIA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

This information is supplied by Royal Jordanian (RJ) Information department at the Queen Alia International Airport. Tel. (06)53200-5, where it should always be verified.

ARRIVALS

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)

16:00Jeddah (J)

16:00Abu Dhabi (U)

16:15Agaba (U)

16:30Mekki (J)

16:35Muscat, Dubai (U)

16:35Doha, Bahrain (U)

16:45Beirut (U)

16:45Calao (U)

16:45Paris (U)

16:45London (U)

16:45Toronto, Montreal (U)

other Flights (Terminal 2)

06:00Larnaca (CY, KLM)

06:15Beirut (ME)

06:25Sana (Y)

06:30Bahrain, Muscat (GP)

DEPARTURES

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)

07:15Beirut (U)

07:20Agaba (U)

07:25Berlin, London (U)

12:00Vienna, Frankfurt (U)

12:30Amsterdam, New York (U)

12:40Istanbul (U)

12:45Riyadh (U)

12:45Calao (U)

12:50Dubai (U)

12:50Columbo (U)

12:50New Delhi (U)

21:00Doha, Karachi (U)

21:45Bangalore (U)

23:00Doha, Abu Dhabi (U)

other Flights (Terminal 2)

06:00Larnaca (CY, KLM)

06:15Beirut (ME)

06:25Sana (Y)

06:30Bahrain, Muscat (GP)

MARKET PRICES

Uppercflower price in Eils per kg.

Apple (red).....650/550

Banana.....500/450

Banana (Muhammar).....450/400

Cabbage.....130/80

Carrot.....400/350

Cauliflower.....260/200

Cucumbers (large).....120/80

Cucumbers (small).....240/180

Eggplant.....80/40

Garlic.....600/500

Lemon.....220/60

Marrow (large).....100/120

Marrow (small).....380/320

Onion (dry).....180/120

Pepper (hot).....200/150

Pepper (sweet).....340/250

Potato.....100/50

Tomato.....360/300

Guava.....500/450

Black Grapes.....350/250

Green Grapes.....350/250

Dates.....550/400

Olives.....550/500

Parsley.....80

ment.....80

Pomegranate.....320/260

Spinach.....300/250

Jordan's day of joy

By a Jordan Times Staff Writer

AMMAN — Young girls danced and women yodelled. Children waived their flags and men staged traditional dabkhas to the beating of drums and the skirling of bagpipes.

Thursday was Jordan's day of joy.

Jordanians from Mafrag, Irbid and Zarqa converged on the capital to stage the largest festivities the country has ever seen. They came from Salt, Karak, Ma'an, Tafilah and Aqaba to join thousands of Ammanites in celebrating His Majesty King Hussein's return home after recovery from surgery in the United States.

Hundreds of thousands of Jordanians lined the streets of Amman in a spontaneous display of "love and support" for the King. Others served traditional Arab coffee and prepared to slaughter camels in front of tents that were pitched around the capital to greet the King's motorcade as it passed through the streets of the city.

"Today is our happiest day," said Khleif Al Mashaqbeh from Rujm Al Sah' Jmal in the Mafrag Governorate.

"King Hussein is the father, the leader, and may God keep him safe for us," said Saleh Olayyan from Al Safawee, in north Jordan.

Eight-year-old Omar Mahmoud waived his flag as he walked by his father and mother who drove from Zarqa; and Sheikh Quteish Fayyad from Mahes recited poetry in praise of the King.

"I am 65 years old and I have never seen such festivities in Jordan," said Sheikh Awad Sleiman Al Shobaki from Khashafiyat Al Shawahkeh in East Amman. "This is the least we can do for Abu Abdullah, he said as passers-by drank coffee in the tent that his tribe had set up next to the Ministry of Interior Circle.

Outside the tent, school children, women, men and children shouted slogans wishing the King long life and pledging support for the Monarchy, while flags and banners festooned cars, buses, and buildings all over Amman.



A MOTHERLY WELCOME: Her Majesty the Queen Mother Zein Al Sharaf greets His Majesty King Hussein at Zahran Palace. The Queen Mother

appeared in good health in her first public appearance since the King's departure to the U.S. in August (photos by Yusef Al 'Allan)



Camels, sheep sacrificed

By Laney Salisbury
Special to The Jordan Times

AMMAN — Hundreds of goats, sheep and camels were slaughtered in a traditional thanksgiving gesture across the capital for the safe return of His Majesty King Hussein Thursday.

At least 250 camels and 1000 sheep were herded into Amman where they were tied to trees or packed onto trucks since Tuesday's announcement of the King's arrival, according to a municipality officer joining in the festivities.

Bedouin tribes and families pitched tents and served bitter, cardomen, spiced-coffee and sweets to throngs of guests. Men danced the dabkha and women clapped their hands to the rhythm of tunes praising the

King. Bedouin leaders smoked the honey-flavored tobacco of the hubble-bubble and reminisced the early days of Jordan.

"Even at the time of the King's coronation there weren't celebrations like this," said Hazi Al Fayez, 72, of the 100,000 member Bani Sakhr tribe.

"We praise God for the King's return and his complete recovery," he said from his tent pitched by the Fifth Circle in Jabal Amman.

At the Fourth Circle as the Royal motorcade inched from the Third Circle, men in shifts unsheathed daggers that curved to a point and raised them up to the sun. Waving them while singing traditional congratulatory chants, the blades caught snatches of

sunlight breaking free from the clouds.

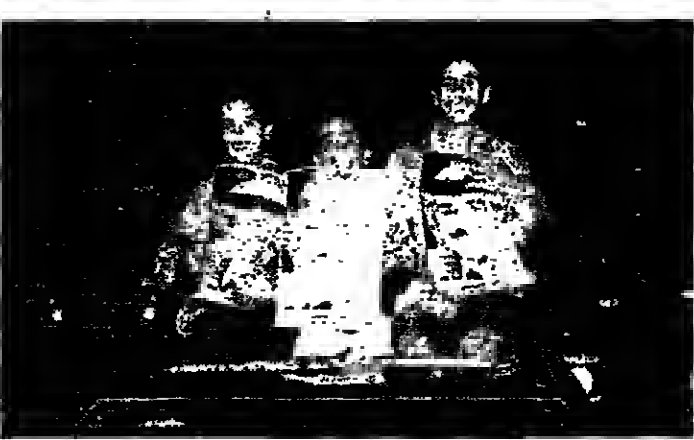
"One should have coffee with him. May be the King will stop," the butcher cried from the back of flatbed truck where a camel was tied.

As the silver Mercedes approached, the beat of "Hashemi, Hashemi" grew and the camels, their necks twisted back to look almost like delicate swans, brayed and struggled to break free from its restraining cords.

"Welcome Hussein," the butcher cried.

With a single swipe of a dagger, red blood pulsed onto the white concrete.

In a sign of honour to the King, the meat was cut up for passers-by to eat at home.



A new pledge of allegiance

AMMAN (J.T.) — Commentators' an columnist in the local press Thursday dedicated their writings to His Majesty King Hussein's return home.

Writing in Al Ra'i daily columnist Tereq Masarweh said: "Thursday was not a normal day of rejoicing for the Jordanian people but rather a manifestation of true love to their leader."

"The day is reminiscent of that when the King was proclaimed monarch of Jordan when he was barely 18 years of age," said the writer. "The people of Jordan turn out en masse Thursday to welcome back their leader after an absence of more than a month during which they were full of concern over his health and full of expectation," said the writer.

"By opening their arms to the King, Jordanians are indeed honouring and congratulating themselves on his safe return home," he added.

"This kind and loving people are displaying their allegiance

and genuine love to you and welcoming you back to lead the march," said Abdul Rahim Omar in Al Ra'i. The writer said that Jordanians have reciprocated the King's affection over the four decades during which they accompanied him through the various crises. He said: "Jordanian people take pride in their King's wise leadership and indeed await the moment for his resuming his duty."

Mohammad Kawash, a columnist in Al Dustour, said Jordanians consider King Hussein the Sharif of the all Arabs everywhere. Welcoming the King upon his safe return, the writer recalled the "joyous welcome accorded to his great grandfather Sharif Hussein Ben Ali of Mecca when he led the Arab forces towards liberation and unity of the Arab World."

"What the people of Jordan are doing now," he said, "is a genuine alliance and renewed

loyalty to the Hashemite throne."

Mohammad Subeichi, columnist in Ad Dustour, said the bond between King and people is exemplary, "saying that together, the King and his people are living a continuous revolution. The writer said that the turn out of masses into the streets, yards and public squares of Amman was "a manifestation of loyalty and a plebiscite on the King's great popularity." He said that the rally was an embodiment of national unity and an expression of the continuation of the Great Arab Revolt.

Ahmad Dabbas, a columnist in Sawt Al Shaab daily, said people of Jordan are voicing their confidence allegiance and trust in the King, their leader who had worked with them and for them over many years. "It is a historic moment for the Jordanians and a chance to renew the true meaning of the unity between the people and their leader," he said.

Jordan Times

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Symbol of nationhood

THE MILLION strong Jordanians who turned out to make His Majesty's homecoming a memorable historic occasion were of course making a political statement. It is that King Hussein is way ahead of any other political institution in the country and that despite problems and hardships that face them all true Jordanian citizens reaffirm their faith and trust in his leadership. It was not only about the political side of the story that this number of people turned out to welcome back their leader, however. The human side, in the opinion of many of us, is what really drove Jordanians uninhibited into the streets of the capital to greet their beloved monarch.

Not everybody knows His Majesty personally, even though many do. But everybody who meets him knows just how much the King is and how much more he can be loved. This is a man who by gift of nature possesses proven political instincts, unique leadership qualities and great personal charm and sincerity all at once.

The King would probably blush at hearing that he truly deserves every bit of "welcome home" sentiments and emotions he got from fellow Jordanians yesterday. We do not shy away from saying this to him though, simply because he should know, and be sure about by now, that his people love him and they owe him at least as much as what he has given them and his country over the past four decades. It has to be further said that the lessons from Thursday's historic event are indeed many and cannot be lost on us, neither now nor at any time in the future. We are at a stage of our nation-building process where and when we should learn the most from the experience of His Majesty's illness, his recovery and return to an unprecedented show of national feelings and unity afterwards. The symbol of nationhood, unity and progress His Majesty represents for Jordan and all Jordanians has to encompass other areas of our lives, especially in exploring largely untapped resources of tolerance, work and discipline which still lie dormant and latent in our relatively young society and budding democracy.

But as one intelligent Jordanian observed yesterday, the way His Majesty's homecoming happened yesterday can be seen and interpreted as a national plebiscite in which the leader overwhelmingly won a new mandate from his people and which indeed makes his leadership the solution they seek for the days ahead. The real solution of course lies in making full use by our government, institutions and people of the monarch's enlightened leadership. Our country would do well to look to its leader as the guiding light to the new age of self-dependence and democracy that we have just embarked on. Knowing him and his style of leadership it would be the single most important gift the country can give its leader on the happy occasion of his recovery and safe return home.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

JORDANIAN ARABIC dailies Thursday gave a tumultuous welcome to His Majesty King Hussein upon his return to Amman following his recovery from surgery in the United States. Al Ra'i daily said the return of the King marked a meeting between leader and people overjoyed over this long-awaited meeting and the success of the operation. The people of Jordan open their arms wide for the King, their leader who has led them through various crises and continues to lead the march towards democracy and progress, said the daily. The paper said that the mass rallies in Amman and other towns, the march on the capital by people from various governorates and all manifestations of welcome to the Monarch can only reflect the true love cherished by the people for their leader. People from the rural regions, the hadda and urban areas of the Kingdom are rejoicing over the King's recovery and his return safely to them, the paper continued. This spectacular display of allegiance, of love and welcome for the King reflects national unity a solid stand behind the leader, the paper added. The paper said that as the Jordanians welcome their King back, they are full of hope that the march of progress will continue under his wise leadership.

A COLUMNIST in Al Dustour said that the rallies, the turn out of hundreds of thousands to welcome the King and the manifestation of true love for their leader can only mean that nothing can ever disrupt the national unity of the Jordanian people. Mohammad Subeidi said that the popular manifestation of love and allegiance to the King is a true referendum on the King's popularity among his people. Furthermore, the arrival in Amman, from the occupied Arab territories, of a group representing the Arab inhabitants under Israeli rule, can only reaffirm the unity of the Palestinians and the Jordanians. The writer said that the Jordanians are living through a continuous revolution, launched by the King and his people, and a constant renewal of love and allegiance reciprocated by the two sides. He said it was hoped that such a revolution would lead to a new revolution of modernisation of Jordanian institutions and the Jordanian way of thinking, and give new impetus and further momentum to the ongoing process of democracy and progress in every field.

Democracy can mesh with Islam, says Tunisian exile

By Tom Porteous



Rached Al Ghanouchi

LONDON — Three years of exile have taught Rached Al Ghanouchi not to give his address to strangers on the telephone. If you want an appointment, he gives you a rendez-vous at the nearest suburban railway station and sends a young man to meet you.

The young man will recognise you because, following Mr. Al Ghanouchi's instructions, you will be carrying a certain newspaper. You will recognise the young man among the afternoon commuters returning from work in central London because of his typical North African features. Large limbs, swarthy skin, unshaven face, dark eyes, he could have been plucked straight from one of the gangs of unemployed who roam the streets of Casablanca, Oran, Algiers or Tunis.

The young man greets you with a friendly handshake and escorts you down a tree-lined avenue to Mr. Al Ghanouchi's latest temporary abode, a small first-floor apartment in a semi-detached redbrick house. Rached Al Ghanouchi dreams of returning home in triumph, riding on the Islamic wave which many predict will engulf North Africa in the coming years; for the time being, however, he has to make do with an anonymous exile in this sprawling middle class West London suburb of Ealing. At home he and other leaders of his banned political party Al Nahda face trial, imprisonment and even death. But even at this distance, Mr. Al Ghanouchi exerts a heavy influence on Tunisian politics.

"Arabs in North Africa Wage Deadly Fight With Islamic Militants," runs the front page headline in the International Herald Tribune (IHT). The recent newspaper article is prompted by the trial in Tunis of almost 300 members of Al Nahda for conspiracy

"The important thing is to create a state which represents the will of the people, so that the... citizen feels a sense of self-respect, so that he feels that the state reflects his own opinion."

to overthrow the Tunisian government of President Zine Abidine Ben Ali. The trial, writes the IHT's Arab affairs correspondent, is part of a campaign by North African governments to counter a "fundamentalist surge" championed by younger hardliners among Tunisian, Algerian and Egyptian Muslims... the latest and most violent phase of a decade-long offensive in most Arab countries by banned or barely tolerated Islamic movements.

Mr. Al Ghanouchi does not look or speak like someone mastering the "most violent phase of a decade-long offensive" of militant Islam. Soberly dressed in a grey business suit, he sits sunk in the corner of a sofa in a barely furnished living room, and talks in a low voice about himself, about Tunisia and about his movement. There is not one personal touch in this room, no photographs, no pictures, no ornaments. The room gives the impression that its occupant is ready to leave from one minute to the next. It is the lair of a restless, hounded exile. And exile is beginning to etch deep, precocious lines on Mr. Al Ghanouchi's face and to turn his hair and beard prematurely grey.

Mr. Al Ghanouchi's spiritual and political development follows the classic pattern of those of his generation who have come to regard Islam as the answer and solution to the problems of the Arab World. Born to a poor devout Tunisian family, he was drawn in the 1950s to socialism, Arab nationalism, Baathism and Nasserism, ideologies which were in opposition to those of the Islamic movement then almost exclusively represented in the Arab World by the Muslim Brotherhood.

After the defeat of the Arabs at the hands of Israel in 1967, Mr. Al Ghanouchi, who was studying in Damascus, became convinced that the essentially Western ideologies of nationalism and socialism were not capable of meeting the challenge posed by what he calls "the Zionist invasion" of the Arab region. At the same time, he says, "I was not psychologically at ease with the totality of leftist ideas." Islam presented itself as the alternative.

"My father," says Mr. Al Ghanouchi, "knew the Koran by heart. My whole family led a spiritual life. When I left home in the 1950s, I entered a storm of estrangement. There was this clash between my religious upbringing and life in a society

strongly influenced by the West. There was no salvation from this conflict except through a return to Islam. But not to the simple Islam of personal and spiritual experience. Rather to Islam as an ideology in which spiritual needs meet political and cultural needs."

"My coming over to the Islamic camp brought me psychological peace and harmony with my childhood upbringing and with my culture. In addition, this transformation provided me with a tool for the struggle, a political weapon with which to defend the nation and its civilisation to which I belonged." After a year in Paris at the height of the student agitation of the late 1960s, Mr. Al Ghanouchi returned to Tunis where he took up a post teaching philosophy at high school level. It was there that he began his political work, using Islam to combat the then strong influence of secular political thought among Tunisian students.

"The subject matter of the philosophy I was teaching," says Mr. Al Ghanouchi, "was established within the framework of Western thought: Marx, Freud, Sartre, Descartes. This was the intellectual mood which governed the universities and Tunisian youth. So it was our duty to start an ideological struggle to defend Islam with the mind and bring to light the strength of Islam."

A decade of political agitation in Tunisia's schools, universities, mosques and cultural centres culminated in 1981 with the foundation of the first modern political Islamic movement in Tunisia — the movement now known as Al Nahda, the Renaissance. Today, the confrontation between Islamic groups like Al Nahda and the governments of North Africa is often characterised as a simple clash between modern, forward looking "secularism" and backward looking religious "fundamentalism." But Mr. Al Ghanouchi, who clearly sees himself as a forward looking modernist, disputes this way of looking at the ideological conflict.

Of the government in Tunis which he has dedicated his life to opposing, Mr. Al Ghanouchi says: "They want to convince the West that they are secularists and modernists protecting Tunisia from fundamentalist extremists. This rationale is what gives them their raison d'être as far as the West is concerned. They are telling Europe: We have a mission to perform in North Africa, namely to stop the religious extremists from controlling your southern flank, and that is why we deserve financial assistance and loans from you."

But in reality, says Mr. Al Ghanouchi, the state in Tunisia, like other states in the rest of North Africa, is not strictly secular. There was never the separation of state and religion in the Muslim World that there was in Europe in the Age of Enlightenment. Even in the most advanced Arab countries, the state still controls mosques and religious endowments, interprets religion, appoints the imams, and sets the religious agenda. "Tunisia is theocracy," says Mr. Al Ghanouchi. "In the sense that the state claims that it represents religion. The state says that it is even more religious than the Islamic movement... In fact no Arab ruler today can go to his people and say that his state is not an Islamic state. All Arab leaders claim that their states are Islamic states."

If this is the case, what is the ideological difference between the government and Al Nahda? If each one claims an Islamic ideology, why should Tunisians believe that a political movement like Al Nahda is more genuine in its commitment to Islam than president Ben Ali himself? Are not both open to the charge of manipulating the language and slogans of Islam for political, opportunistic ends?

"We did not enter the political arena demanding an Islamic state," retorts Mr. Al Ghanouchi, who himself is responsible for much of Al Nahda's political theory. "Until now we have not raised the banner of the Islamic Nation. The crux of our demands is freedom and democracy. We believe that the problem of Tunis today is not the absence of Islamic law but the absence of the rule of law

altogether."

Emphasising that his political movement is completely different from Algeria's hardline fundamentalist party, which was poised to seize power through elections last year and had promised to dismantle all government and democratic structures, Mr. Al Ghanouchi professes respect for pluralistic systems of government: The problem is that what we have in Tunisia today is the rule of the individual, of the police, of the party, of the gang, and in such circumstances a dialogue concerning an Islamic state or a non-Islamic state is not the issue," he notes. "The important thing is to create a state which represents the will of the people, so that the Tunisian citizen feels a sense of self-respect, so that he feels that the state reflects his own opinion. We haven't got a clear picture of what an Islamic state means, but we do have a clear picture of what democracy means and what freedom means, and we think that if a democratic climate is created in Tunisia, then we can improve our ideas and programmes so that the idea of an Islamic state becomes clearer."

But how is Tunisia to create such a democratic climate? Algeria's experiment with democracy has more or less failed, with the army taking over to prevent an Islamic revolution, and the crisis has only deepened Algeria's daunting economic and social problems. Moreover, the Tunisian authorities have shown no indication of going back on their consistent determination to eradicate groups like Al Nahda, which they accuse of violence and terrorism. After five years in jail and three years in exile, Mr. Al Ghanouchi is only too familiar with the tactics of Tunisia's security forces.

"My coming over to the Islamic camp brought me psychological peace and harmony with my childhood upbringing and with my culture."

But the leader of Al Nahda believes that the repressive policies of the Tunisian state are in the long run self-defeating, eating away little by little at the foundations of the regime and at its support even among those who oppose the idea of an Islamic alternative. "On the surface, life in Tunisia looks calm," says Mr. Al Ghanouchi. "The tourists are enjoying the beaches... But they don't feel the depth of the tragedy. The facade is beautiful and touristic, but underneath there is suffering and terror. The people are quiet now. But their anger is accumulating, and experience has taught us that after a period of long accumulation there is an explosion, like the riots of 1978 and 1984. We are waiting for the big explosion that will sweep away the regime and bring freedom and democracy."

This is the language not of the political realist, but of the political ideologue. Many predict that there will indeed be an explosion, but that it will only bring chaos, not freedom and democracy. So the Tunisian authorities are able to argue with some credibility that Tunisia has benefitted economically from its present position as a stable, pro-Western haven in an area of instability and extremism. While foreign investors have shied away from putting their money in neighbouring Libya or Algeria, Tunisia has enjoyed a steady flow of capital investment from the other side of the Mediterranean, turning Tunis into the most affluent and cosmopolitan capital on the North African littoral.

According to the Tunisian government and the government controlled media, to open the political system to the Islamic trend would produce the same civil strife as openness created in Algeria, and it would frighten away the foreigners and ultimately damage the interests of the Tunisian people as a whole. This is an argument which carries some weight with businessmen and diplomats in Tunis, but Mr. Al Ghanouchi dismisses it as shortsighted logic determined by the short term financial interests of a wealthy minority.

"The Tunisian economic boom has only benefitted a small minority," he says. "In Tunis you don't have to go 20 kilometres from Al Menza to Jebel Al Ahmar and you find yourself in another world. Al Menza is like a luxurious high class Parisian district, while Jebel Al Ahmar is not just the Third World, but the fourth world, the fifth world!" He proceeded to deliver a long and quite specific tirade against the corruption of Tunisia's ruling elite, concluding: "As long as the Tunisian people are not allowed to share in the economic interests that the West has in Tunisia, these interests will only be temporary,

threatened by revolution and by the danger that Tunisia will become a centre of violence and civil war."

So just as the Tunisian government threatens instability and chaos if the Islamic movement is allowed into the political system, Mr. Al Ghanouchi threatens chaos and instability if it is not allowed in. But President Ben Ali's Western allies are more inclined to believe him than the exiled leader of Al Nahda. Since the collapse of Communism in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, militant Islam is seen by a growing consensus in the West as the new enemy of the developed world. Not true counters Mr. Al Ghanouchi: "It is the international arms merchants and the arms industries which are insisting that Islam is the future enemy of the West. They have built their future on war and cannot live in an atmosphere of peace. Weapons are a big industry and this industry has an important influence on the media, on politics, on elections. The arms industry has a vested interest in militarisation and high defence budgets, but this needs a threat of war, and the threat of war requires an enemy, so they have invented Islam as the new enemy."

Mr. Al Ghanouchi, who started off speaking in a low barely audible voice, is now increasing the volume of his speech. The words tumble out rhythmically as though he were delivering a sermon in a mosque. The future of humanity, no less, depends on avoiding this kind of logic and on rediscovering the common heritage which the West shares with Islam, he says. "Islam is not the enemy of the West. It is a religion derived from the substance of peace, not from the substance of war. Peace is one of the names of Allah, and war is not one of His names. Western culture is the closest culture to Islam, because we share a common religious root. We Muslims believe Jesus is a true prophet and we believe in his message and in the message of Moses."

Moreover, according to Mr. Al Ghanouchi, Islam and Western culture share the same intellectual sources. Greek culture, the continuation of the ancient Eastern culture of Babylon and the Pharaohs, passed on its intellectual heritage to the Muslims who in turn transmitted it to the West, making possible the European Renaissance. Today more than ever — with Muslims fighting Christians in the very heart of Europe, in what was Yugoslavia — it is vitally important to recognise these common sources as well as the common interests of the modern Western and Islamic Worlds, according to Mr. Al Ghanouchi.

Technological progress has made the world smaller. There is not enough space for war. So if we want to think about a real future for humanity, we must think about the logic of peace and the logic of our common destiny," Mr. Al Ghanouchi falls silent. The interview is over. He gets up from the sofa and moves towards the door, slipping back into his quiet, everyday tone of voice to make small talk about his life in London. He is perfectly free here, but he misses Tunis. Exile is worse than prison, he says. But he is making the most of it: getting to know England, trying to learn English. Until a year ago, he was in France. But the French refused to extend his visa. He is grateful for the liberal tradition of political asylum in Britain — World News Link.

Kuwaiti elections — a by-product of Iraqi invasion

By David Brough

Reuters

KUWAIT — Kuwaitis vote for a new parliament on October 5 in an election precipitated by Iraq's invasion two years ago.

The election would have been even less likely if Kuwait's Western allies had not intervened to drive out Iraqi forces seven months later.

The August 1990 invasion, the most traumatic event in the nation's brief history, emboldened liberals and democrats who were traditionally a powerless minority in Kuwaiti society.

The U.S.-led allies added to the pressure for political change by campaigning behind the scenes for a more representative system of government.

Western critics of the Gulf war, citing the lack of democracy in the emirate, had said it was not worth fighting to restore the status quo.

On the eve of the invasion, Kuwait had only a partially elected national council without legislative powers.

The ruling Sabah family, which retains key positions in the cabinet, had dissolved the only

parliament in the Gulf in 1986, during the Iran-Iraq war, saying there was a foreign conspiracy against the country.

So the elections, in which 301 candidates are competing for 50 seats, are in many ways the Kuwaiti government's answer to its foreign and domestic critics of the past two years.

But some opponents of the government would like to see greater representation.

Out of 600,000 Kuwaiti citizens, only about 81,000 have registered to vote. Voters must be male, over 21 and able to trace their roots in the emirate back to before 1920, women cannot vote or stand as candidates.

"Naturalised Kuwaitis must be given the right to exercise their franchise," said Ahmad Al Saeed, the speaker of the dissolved parliament and a prominent government critic. He is standing as an independent.

Diplomats described the campaign climate as free and democratic and said Kuwait's Western allies would be dismayed if the government dismissed parliament again.

Free press, fair trial — walking the tight rope

By Mohammad I. Ayish

The detention of two Islamist members of the Lower House of Parliament on charges of illegally setting up an armed organisation and hoarding and transporting weapons has stirred controversy over the wisdom of media reporting of a case still under investigation by the prosecutor general.

Because no information has been officially released on the findings of the investigation (which has not been completed yet), considerable amount of speculation has developed on the case in the country's print media, especially those thriving on yellow journalism and sensationalism.

To end the press game of "guessing," the government has stepped in, invoking a 1959 criminal proceedings law which places certain penalties (fines and imprisonment) on editors and reporters for publishing information which could influence judges, witnesses or court staff entrusted with investigation. In one way or another, the manner in which this situation would be handled by the press is bound to put to test its widely-recognised and long-held commitment to playing a socially-responsible role in our democratic system. As for the government, the challenge at hand is how to bring about a fair trial, not vulnerable to mass-mediated insinuations, for the two deputies, without serious infringements on press freedom.

By brandishing a 1959 criminal law in the face of news-hungry reporters and editors poised for publishing information on the Shbeilat-Qarrash case, the government's behaviour seems to be based on few legitimate grounds. First, reporters' race for news about the case seems to have been motivated by their routine unquenchable thirst for information that they hope would help expand their readership base, more than by concerns about the public's right to know.

The press has had no access to records, documents, material evidence, and to the two deputies after their arrest to be able to make factual judgement on whether both were guilty or innocent. Talking to family members and relatives of the men would rather keep public discussions of the case shrouded in overwhelming sentimentality, thus precluding the rationality needed in this type of delicate situation.

Second, letting public discussions of the case proceed as such would create what looks like a press trial of this case, leading perhaps to conclusions totally different from the verdict of the court-administered trial.

Some newspaper columnists and reporters even suggested that the arrest of a deputy of the calibre of Mr. Shbeilat was a deliberate and carefully planned attempt by the government to deal a blow to what seems to be a growing Islamic challenge in Jordan. On the other hand, other media people argued that it is exactly

because of the important stature of Mr. Shbeilat that they would think the arrest of the deputy was motivated by solid incriminating evidence. A gap between media-created public expectations of the nature of the case and the actual outcome of the investigation could potentially have serious repercussions on the democratic process in Jordan.

Third, and here seems to lie the most legitimate government concern is that massive speculative publicity about the case could tend to affect the manner in which trial judges, court staff and other investigators view the issue at hand. It is true that court verdicts are expected to be solely based on available concrete evidence; yet, the potential bearing of published information on the case remains grave.

For the press, the consideration of these legitimate concerns by the government about a fair trial for the two deputies should in no way be interpreted as tantamount to submission to gag orders prohibiting all publicity on the case. The new government's caution to journalists does not seem to preclude the publication of certain statements made by the prosecutor general or any of his office staff, or by the lawyers defending the two deputies.

The government step should in fact serve as a catalyst for journalists to always verify their sources of information, reconsider their selection of sources and eschew extra-sensational coverage so as to not negatively affect the process of investigation. While such journalistic practices may not be professionally sanctioned, there is no law which prohibits them from doing so in normal and less delicate situations, and thus these practices are protected by law in Jordan.

"A 1959 criminal proceeding law places certain penalties on editors and reporters for publishing information which could influence judges, witnesses or court staff entrusted with investigation."

If the press really believe in possessing the minimum of social accountability, this is quite an opportunity to translate such convictions into reality, regardless of the superficial curbs on its freedom. In this particular case, the societal interest in having a fair trial for the two deputies is far more overriding than in irresponsible media reporting of the case.

This principle seems to be applied by U.S. courts handling press publicity of ongoing trials. Although the U.S. Supreme Court has over the years stricken down several lower courts' rulings embodying prior restraints on press reporting of trials, it is widely held that where criminal trials are pending, in progress, or concluded, restrictive orders may be approved, especially where there is evidence of "a deep and bitter pattern of community prejudice," creating a clear and present danger to the fair administration of justice.

The dilemma facing the government as it seeks to enforce this restrictive order is that only journalists operating inside Jordan would be liable to prosecutions in cases of violations. Given the ubiquity of modern mass communications, and the massive exposure of Jordanians to externally-originated broadcasts and print media, the war of insinuations is likely to stay alive; Jordanians would continue to be informed on the matter; and not much could be done about it.

The writer, until recently a professor of journalism at the University of Yarmouk, is currently working for the Noor Al Hussein Foundation.

Yemeni leader emerges from seclusion to make demands

SANAA (AP) — The vice-president of the unified Yemen has emerged from two months of seclusion to demand elections on schedule and a quicker merger of police and military forces.

Ali Salem Al Beidh, the secretary general of the Socialist Yemen Party that ruled formerly Marxist Aden, in a speech late Wednesday urged the two leading parties to be models for peaceful and democratic means to reach power.

He also called for dialogue between the parties to end the violence and for the country to reach friendly solutions to its border differences with Saudi Arabia and Oman.

Mr. Beidh went into seclusion last July in his southern home province of Hadramaut. Aides said he was dissatisfied with the pace of the merger of North and South Yemen and the violence that has targeted officials of his party.

He came out of seclusion late Wednesday at a political rally in Aden where he reaffirmed his dedication to the merger process.

his party started two years ago with its counterpart in conservative North Yemen — the General People's Congress — and its president Ali Abdullah Saleh.

The two leaders agreed on a transitional phase that ends Nov. 21, before which elections are to be held on a multi-party basis. More than political parties have formed since.

"All efforts should be concentrated on holding the elections as fixed in November, for any hesitation in that respect will harm Yemen's domestic and foreign interests, will inflame our problems, and will dash our credibility in the eyes of the world," he said in his speech.

In the capital Sanaa, the state-run media ran a brief item about Mr. Beidh attending a political rally to mark the former North's national day. It said he called for discussion of national issues through "open dialogue."

The full text appeared Thursday in Sanaa in the weekly magazine Al Thawri, which is the mouthpiece of Mr. Beidh's party.

U.S. plans seizure of Iraqi assets

(Continued from page 1)

market prices and transfer the proceeds to the U.N.

3. States are not required to transfer funds in excess of \$200 million.

4. States can deduct any debts Iraq owes to its nationals or corporations or any claims against the fund prior to the adoption of the resolution.

5. The secretary-general is to ascertain the whereabouts and amounts of the oil products or proceeds from their sales and report to the Security Council.

6. The resolution is aimed at funds derived from petroleum or petroleum products but excludes petrochemical derivatives.

7. The funds are to pay for U.N. weapons inspectors, humanitarian aid to Iraqis suffering from U.N. economic sanctions and victims of Iraq's invasion of Kuwait.

Diplomats said the proposed draft, which is by no means certain of passage, would be drawn so narrowly that any prior national or commercial claims against Iraq's financial assets would be excluded from the seizure.

That would remove from consideration all assets held in Britain and perhaps most of those in France and Japan as well.

But there are relatively fewer Iraqi debts in the United States, and Washington hopes as much \$1 billion of its frozen Iraqi assets can be used.

Iraq has declared more than \$3 billion in frozen financial assets in banks around the world but no one is certain of the exact total.

In Salahadin, Iraq, opponents of President Saddam, meeting all together for the first time on his soil, Thursday proclaimed their unity and intention to create a federal government.

"There is a good atmosphere in the meeting and we expect to come out with good results," Kamal Fouad, a leading Kurdish official, said after the morning session.

He said the delegates had decided to work from resolutions made at a conference in Vienna in June. The Shiite groups had boycotted the conference, but their presence in the northern Iraqi city was a major boost to the opposition.

Sixth round of bilaterals ends

(Continued from page 1)

lasted for a month, did not achieve any progress in points of essence against all expectations. But, he added, this round was a basic stage in the negotiations process.

On his expectations for the coming rounds, he said everything depends on Israel. "If the Israelis reach a final formula on the peace strategy, we might find new phenomena, and if nothing of the sort was achieved we will remain in this kind of risk," he said.

On Thursday, Dr. Majali and

several members of the Jordanian negotiating team met at the U.S. State Department with U.S. Assistant Secretary of State Edward Djerejian for an exchange of views on the ongoing peace process.

Following the meeting, Dr. Majali said the U.S. official had stressed the keenness of U.S. President George Bush, White House Chief of Staff James Baker and acting Secretary of State Lawrence Eagleburger in the peace process.

"At the meeting we felt that the U.S. administration is more serious," he said.

Zayed, Assad discuss island dispute

(Continued from page 1)

Iran and the UAE. The meeting is seen as the first breakthrough in efforts to defuse the Abu Musa row.

British Defence Secretary Malcolm Rifkind called on Iran Wednesday to resolve the dispute peacefully.

"A number of people whom we've met both in Kuwait and in Saudi Arabia have expressed concern about certain actions of Iran," Mr. Rifkind told Reuters and the Times of London in an

interview on board an anti-submarine frigate off Kuwait.

"We have said quite clearly that we support the resolution of the GCC that these matters should be determined by peaceful, negotiated means rather than by use of force," he said.

"It should be quite clear to anyone contemplating aggression that the United Nations and those countries which have given the most active support to the United Nations are prepared to do what is necessary to try and ensure peace in the region."

Million turn out to greet King

(Continued from page 1)

their guns in the air after a night of celebrations with honking, music and dancing in the streets.

Also for the first time, many members of the Lower House of Parliament got the taste of public transport when they were driven to and from the airport in a distinct red and white government bus.

Traffic policemen, themselves celebrating the occasion, tried to restore order but overlooked the hundreds of trucks, buses, pickups and cars crammed with people which otherwise would have drawn heavy fines for overloading.

Many of the vehicles flew the flags and were plastered with posters of the King and fitted with loudspeakers which blared national songs. The bulk of the vehicles spent the night cruising around town, jamming petrol stations and sandwich stands.

Tents were pitched in every vacant space on the side of the streets through which the royal motorcade passed, and all of them offered free coffee and sweets.

Hundreds of camels and sheep were slaughtered in thanksgiving

sacrifice. In many cases tribal leaders appeared to vying with each other to score the highest number of sacrifices.

Banners welcoming the King and thanking God for his successful surgery decorated every available telephone and electricity pole and tree while huge portraits of the King were draped on buildings, including ministries and government departments as well as hotels.

Dozens of buses carried people crowding and precariously perched on their roofs and the signs they carried indicated that they had come from outlying regions from the north as well as south on the perilous journey. Only a few minor accidents were reported; two people were hit by cars and a security officer was hit by a stray "celebration" bullet.

Officials estimated that over one million people — about one third of Jordan's population — had turned out on Amman's streets to greet the King.

The entire proceeding was broadcast alive on Jordan Television and Radio, which also beamed newly written songs by Jordanians praising the King and thanking God for His Majesty's recovery from illness.

Syria's delay to pullout raises fears of new crisis in Lebanon

By Faronk Nassar
The Associated Press

BEIRUT — Syria is delaying the withdrawal of its army from Beirut and other coastal cities, fueling a political crisis that many fear could rekindle sectarian hostilities.

Under a 1989 Arab League-brokered peace treaty, in which the Syrians were given virtual stewardship of Lebanon in return for pacifying it, they were to withdraw from the Bekaa Valley in eastern Lebanon two years after political reforms were ratified.

Those reforms, giving Muslims an equal share of power with the long-dominant Christians, were endorsed by Lebanon's parliament Sept. 24, 1990.

But President Hafez Al Assad, despite U.S. urging, is apparently reluctant to withdraw, as agreed. Syria has had about 40,000 troops in Lebanon since 1976, when they moved in as a peacekeeping force.

A Syrian failure to abide by the treaty could cause tension triggered by Lebanon's divisive parliamentary elections earlier this month to boil over into renewed sectarian violence.

Syria also risks a serious rift with the United States, which wants a Syrian pullback as soon as possible.

Arab diplomats and analysts believe Syria will withdraw from Beirut and the coast to the Bekaa by the end of the year. But the sources say Damascus will probably retain control of northern Lebanon and port of Tripoli, Lebanon's second largest city, indefinitely.

The boundaries of a Syrian redeployment are poorly defined in the 1989 treaty and the Syrian stress that Tripoli and neighboring Akkar province are not covered by it.

Syria has a longstanding claim to Tripoli, where the 850,000 population is dominated by Sunni Muslims. Akkar is home to 50,000 Alawite Muslims who traditionally owe allegiance to Syria.

There are widespread fears that Syria's allies will carry out bombings and kidnappings to demonstrate what will happen if the Syrians leave.

Lebanon's security forces, badly fractured during the civil war and still being restructured, are considered incapable of maintaining order on their own.

Secularism has risen alarmingly since Damascus insisted President Elias Hrawi's Syrian-backed government in Beirut hold parliamentary elections.

Electoral districts were redrawn so that the new parliament would be packed with Syrian supporters, who would endorse a government that would be in Assad's pocket.

The balloting, the first in Lebanon for two decades, sharpened sectarian differences and has left Mr. Hrawi's government with little credibility.

Maronite Christians, who are losing their traditional hold on power, are the main voice clamoring for a withdrawal by the Syrians, who they view as an occupying army.

Sunni Muslims, too, would like to see the Syrians go. But their elder statesman, former Premier Saeb Salam, said in a recent television interview: "The Syrians should stay because the security vacuum they'll leave behind carries the risk of being filled by the militias, which means another round of civil war."

There are many who fear that with the country gripped by its worst political crisis since the war, Syria will now cite the turmoil as a pretext for not withdrawing this month.

Controlling Lebanon is a crucial part of Syria's regional strategy and dream of a "greater Syria." It's also a key card in Syria's negotiations with Israel in the U.S.-sponsored Middle East peace talks.

Syria has long asserted that it will not relinquish military control of Lebanon until Israel abandons the so-called "security zone" it occupies in South Lebanon.

State Department spokesman Richard Boucher stressed earlier this month that Washington now wants to see restoration of "full Lebanese sovereignty" accelerated and a Syrian pullback to the Bekaa "as soon as possible."

For now, Syria is ignoring the Americans. With Syria showing some signs of flexibility in the Mideast peace talks for the first time, it's difficult to see how Washington can pressure Damascus.

Is she a ruthless PLO killer, or just a gentle student?

By Shyam Bhatia

With her hands folded demurely above her desk and her hair cascading down to her shoulders, Abir Waheidi is a picture of innocence and a role model for other Palestinian women aspiring to a professional career in a male dominated society.

But recently 23-year-old Waheidi, an engineering student at Bir Zeit University on the West Bank, was denounced by Israeli security agents as the most dangerous terrorist alive, even more deadly than the notorious Ulrike Meinhof of Baader-Meinhof fame.

"She's a good daughter, not aggressive at all and clever in her studies," says her shocked father, Dr. Mohammad Waheidi, a senior employee with UNRWA, the United Nations agency for Palestinian refugees.

"She's respected by her colleagues, very polite at home, she loves people and people love her. We were stunned when she was arrested."

If Israeli claims are to be believed, she is a ruthless killer and head of a secret military cell of the Palestine Liberation Organisation that specialised in attacking Israeli civilians and soldiers.

In 1990, according to a charge sheet prepared by West Bank military authorities, she teamed up with four equally ruthless Palestinian men systematically to attack Israeli targets.

One victim, the Israeli says, was Zvi Klein, a Jewish settler living near the Palestinian town of Ramallah, who was gunned down as he drove his 13-year-old daughter and three of her teenage schoolfriends home from Jerusalem. Klein was shot in the head and died in the hospital; the girls escaped unscathed.

The shooting was to revenge the death of Waheidi's best friend and comrade, Ramzi Shaheen, killed a few weeks earlier in a shoot-out with Israeli soldiers. In retaliation, Ms. Waheidi allegedly paid \$2,500 to a classmate, Issa Samara, to kill any Jew.

After Klein's murder, the Israelis arrested hundreds of Palestinian radicals belonging to factions opposed to the Middle East peace talks launched six weeks earlier in Madrid. As the Israeli government was engaged in delicate negotiations with Yasser Arafat's mainstream Fatah movement, it was assumed Klein's killing had been ordered by Palestinian factions opposed to Mr. Arafat's policy of compromise.

Ms. Waheidi and her friend were not suspected because they were known Fatah supporters. Mohammad Waheidi proudly acknowledges his daughter's sympathies lie with Arafat. "She does not deny this; like 90 per cent of the Palestinians she supports our leader, Yasser Arafat."

He does not believe his daughter will spend the rest of her life in jail. "I think it's all propaganda. What the Israeli security services are trying to do is to malign the PLO by showing that they shoot at unarmed civilians; they want to discredit the PLO by proving they are not sincere about peace."

His conviction has been strengthened by the authorities' lack of success in extracting a televised confession from his daughter. Her lawyer, a human rights advocate, Leah Tsemel, said: "They tried to force us to appear on Israeli television. When she said no, they told her 'OK, if it's Israeli television you object to, we can arrange for you to appear on CNN, BBC, anything you like.'"

"Some other clients of mine now cry with regret because they agreed to such television interviews. They thought they were very wise, but they soon realised that they could not control what was broadcast out of a two-hour interview. What appeared later were bits and pieces cut out of context. I never saw one interview that was positive."

Within her community, Ms. Waheidi has achieved instant stardom. The Arabic press has splashed her picture across its pages, along with praise for her courage and success in eluding Israeli intelligence for more than two years. Palestinians are saying there has been none like her since Leila Khaled, the hijacker who now lives in Damascus, or Dalal Moghrabi, the Palestinian woman commando who planned and was killed in the ambush on 193 Israeli buses in 1978, that left 34 Israelis dead.

"I have had Palestinian women who planted hand grenades or bombs in public places," says Ms. Tsemel. "During the last 20 years it happened quite a few times. But what is unique about Abir's case is that we see it like a movie. To steal a car and use it, plan and run all in broad daylight, is a very brave action. It's Chicago style, that's what we call it here in Israel."

Apart from conspiring to kill Klein, Ms. Waheidi has been charged with attempting to murder four other Israelis. Her self-appointed role, say Israeli security services, was to ride shotgun with a male comrade who was in charge of driving stolen cars. They planned to cruise the main roads of the West Bank until they drew abreast of an Israeli car when Ms. Waheidi, her face hidden in a Palestinian keffiyeh or

scarf, would roll down her window and open fire on a Jewish victim.

Because she was not well trained, the Israelis say, only one man was ever injured in these Mafia-style operations. At least as daring was her role in smuggling a wanted Palestinian from his bed in a government hospital. Tarik Al Madi, injured while trying to assemble a bomb, was hustled out of his ward as doctors and nurses watched helplessly.

Waheidi's friends all say she was politically aware, but find it difficult to think of the student they knew as a hardened killer. "The apple does not fall far from the tree," said a former classmate, pointing out that Ms. Waheidi's father was indicted more than 15 years ago for "subversive political activities" on behalf of the PLO.

Abir was six when Israeli soldiers handcuffed her father and dragged him to prison. She was only allowed to see him on monthly visits, each lasting half an hour. Sometimes they were able to touch fingers, but when it was time to say goodbye Abir had to content herself with blowing kisses through the wire meshing that separated the prisoners from their families — The Observer.



Abir Waheidi, 23, is charged with being a Mafia-style hit-woman

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Norway's reputation as soccer underdogs is over

OSLO (R) — Norway insist they have shattered their reputation as underdogs in international soccer, bailing their shock 2-1 World Cup victory over the Netherlands as the nation's greatest result.

"With this win we've broken a barrier in Norwegian soccer's long history," said coach Egil Olsen after Wednesday night's European Group qualifying match in Oslo.

"For the first time we beat one of the world's top soccer nations who came to Oslo and took us seriously from the first minute," he said. "Previously we've beaten Italy and England, but both victories were because they underestimated the Norwegians."

Newspapers festooned their front pages with coverage of the game — and claimed the win was greater than 2-1 victories over Italy in 1991 and England a decade earlier. Many also hailed Olsen as Norway's best coach.

The tabloid Verdens Gang said Norway was "on the way to the World Cup in the U.S." in 1994 and printed pictures of cowboy boots to prove the point.

Norway had not beaten the Netherlands since 1962 and have only once ever qualified for the World Cup finals, in 1938.

Norway hammered San Marino 10-0 in their first qualifying match, which also comprises England, Poland and Turkey. The Netherlands and England are

rated as favorites to fill the two qualifying places.

The daily Dagbladet, with a picture of Dutch keeper Stanley Menzo outstretched as Goeran Soerloth scored the winning goal, told its readers "Forget England, forget Italy. If you're going to remember anything in 50 years' time, you ought to hang this on the wall."

The Netherlands had hoped to start their World Cup campaign strongly, especially after losing their 1988 European champions crown to Norway's Scandinavian neighbours Denmark in the semi-finals of this year's tournament.

Soerloth scored with a fierce, long range shot late in the second half when the match seemed headed for a 1-1 stalemate after two goals in the opening 10 minutes.

Ajax defender Danny Blind tripped Norwegian striker Jahn Jakobsen when he was clear inside the box in the ninth minute and Kjetil Rekdal coolly slotted home the penalty, sending goalkeeper Menzo the wrong way.

The largely Norwegian crowd were still cheering and waving a forest of flags when Dennis Bergkamp dribbled into the area at the other end and delicately placed an equaliser past diving keeper Erik Thundevold.

Lithuania draw with Denmark
In Vilnius, European cham-

pions Denmark were again humbled by a Baltic team when they were held 0-0 by a depleted Lithuania after missing a penalty in a World Cup qualifier Wednesday.

Midfielder Kim Christofte took the 56th minute spot kick himself after being fouled but his shot bounced to safety off the legs of keeper Valdemaras Martinenas. The Danes, also held to a goalless draw in a World Cup qualifier in Latvia last month, had the best of the European Group 3 game but could not find a way past a Lithuanian team lacking six first-team players.

The Lithuanians jumped for joy at the final whistle and celebrated in the centre circle while the Danes, who have not won since capturing the European title in June, quickly left the pitch.

The Danish forwards showed little sign of improving on their lamentable performance against Latvia and abandoned all sense of team play as the second half progressed.

Lithuania, the best side of the three evenly-matched Baltic Republics, played a much more attacking game than Latvia and had two good chances.

Waldock goal spurs Poland's blushes
In Poznan, Poland, defender

Tomasz Waldock's 33rd minute goal gave Poland a 1-0 victory over Turkey in their opening World Cup soccer qualifier Wednesday.

Waldock let rip from close range after the ball fell into his path from a headed clearance, giving goalkeeper Hayrettin Demirbas no chance.

But the Poles were left regretting a series of missed chances in a European group 2 match they should have won by a handful of goals. Turkey almost snatched a point in the 85th minute when Hakan Sukur's powerful header hit the inside of the post and a relieved Rnman Szwedczyk cleared the rebound off the line.

The tired Poles, playing in the western city of Poznan, were exposed at the back several times as the Turks battled for an equaliser in the dying minutes.

Waldock's goal was the reward for one of Poland's best spells after Roman Kosecki went close with a low drive and Andrzej Juskowiak headed against the bar. Poland pushed forward relentlessly for the first 30 minutes of the second half but Juskowiak was unable to find the touch which helped Poland in the Olympic silver medal in the Barcelona Olympics.

Latvia hold Spain to goalless draw
In Riga, Latvia defended su-

perly to hold Spain to a goalless draw in their World Cup European Group 3 soccer qualifier Wednesday.

The unfancied Baltic side could even have won had striker Einar Linards shown a cooler head.

Linards broke clear of the Spanish defence in the 34th minute, rounded goalkeeper Andoni Zubizarreta but hesitated for a fraction too long and the keeper forced him wide. With just five minutes left, Spanish substitute Alfonso Perez had his side's best chance but his point-blank shot drew a brilliant reflex save from Latvian keeper Oleg Korovayev.

The Latvian defence and the brilliance of Korovayev kept the Spaniards at bay despite a desperate series of last-gasp attacks.

Perez injected some life into the attack when he came on for Gregorio Fonseca after 72 minutes and soon forced Korovayev to make a diving save at his feet.

Spain, who struggled to beat Albania 3-0 in their first qualifier in April, rarely posed a serious threat and were mainly reduced to firing in long-range shots.

Latvia, relying on long clearances and the odd swift break, grew in confidence as the game progressed.

Czechoslovakia beat Faroes 4-0
In Kosice, Czechoslovakia the

host team crushed the tiny Faroe Islands 4-0 in a World Cup soccer qualifier Wednesday with three goals in the last five minutes.

Striker Pavel Nuka scored in the 85th and 87th minutes and Peter Dabovsky converted a penalty with one minute to go as the proud Faroe defences crumbled.

Before they succumbed to the final burst of action, the unfancied Faroes had looked like pulling off a shock in limiting the hosts to a 1-0 win in the European Group 4 match.

Vaclav Nemec had put Czechoslovakia ahead in the 24th minute but they ran out of ideas against a tenacious side who often pulled all 11 players back in defence.

But the Faroes' luck could not last and Nuka broke through in the 85th, turning quickly in front of goal and shooting past diving goalkeeper Jens Martin Knudsen.

Nuka's second goal was a surprise volley from a long pass which Knudsen was again unable to stop.

Dobovsky's penalty came after Turkish referee Ahmad Cakar ruled that Tummus Eli Hansen had handled the ball.

The final score flattered the far more experienced Czechoslovak side who ultimately appeared lacking in ideas.

Mansell seeks record at final European Grand Prix

ESTORIL, Portugal (R) — World drivers champion Nigel Mansell will seek to erase some bad memories in his final European Grand Prix in Portugal this weekend by taking his third Estoril victory and a record ninth win in a season.

Mansell, who clinched the world title in August, is shifting next year from Formula One to Indy Car racing with the Newman-Haas team in the United States after failing to solve contractual problems with the Williams team.

But he still hopes to finish his triumphant first championship year after 12 seasons in Formula One with a blaze of glory in the last three races of 1992 in Portugal, Japan and Australia.

"I always race to win and always give full commitment. It is the only way I know," said Mansell as he looked forward to this Sunday's 71-lap race at Estoril, where he has twice been at the centre of controversy in recent years.

"I like the Estoril circuit. It is a driver's circuit with character as it climbs and descends. But it is also very demanding and can be tough on the cars."

Mansell wooed at Estoril in 1986 for Williams and in 1990 for Ferrari. But the memories that linger longest are the "black flag fiasco" of 1989 and last year's

fateful pit stop when Mansell's Williams left the pits, briefly, with only three wheels.

After his long and difficult contractual dispute, now ended by his retirement, Mansell chases the 30th triumph of his career and a new landmark with his ninth win this season.

He currently shares the record of eight with three-times champion Ayrton Senna of Brazil, who is certain to be one of the Briton's biggest rivals this weekend and one of the focuses of speculation.

Senna has yet to announce his plans for 1993 and remains linked with the two unresolved vacancies at Williams following the decisions of Mansell to retire and of his veteran team-mate Riccardo Patrese of Italy to move to Benetton.

According to most informed sources, Senna is unlikely to join Williams next year and will instead take a year's sabbatical, leaving old rival Alain Prost of France and Briton Martin Brundle to lead the Anglo-French team's challenge.

This has yet to be confirmed, however, and, in the unpredictable and harsh commercial world of Formula One, anything can be expected including the unlikely re-joining of Prost and Senna, who had such a stormy time together at McLaren in the late 1980's.

Manchester United held to League Cup draw

LONDON (R) — Holders Manchester United were held to a 1-1 draw at second division Brighton in the first leg of an English League Cup second round match.

Forward Danny Wallace put United, currently fourth in the Premier League, ahead in the 36th minute in only his second full appearance for the club in a year.

But young Brighton forward Matthew Edwards, given a free transfer by Tottenham at the end of last season, headed the equaliser after 72 minutes.

In Scotland, Aberdeen beat Celtic 1-0 in a Scottish League Cup semifinal to set up their fourth final with champions Rangers in the past six years.

Eoin Jess scored the winner in the 40th minute.

It was a largely disappointing night for the big name clubs, a trend set by Liverpool's shock 4-1 draw at home to third division Chesterfield Tuesday.

The big victims were Everton, Liverpool's neighbours, who fell 1-0 at second division Rotherham.

Bermuda international Shaun Goater ran the visitors ragged and hit the winner in the 18th minute, latching on to a free kick to beat goalkeeper Neville Southall.

First division Newcastle, the only club in England with a 100 per cent league record, held Premier League Middlesbrough to a 0-0 draw while second division Huddersfield led big-spending Blackburn 1-0 until five minutes from time.

England striker Alan Shearer saved Blackburn's blushes with a superb equaliser — his 10th goal of the season.

Meanwhile Norwich and Coventry, two of England's less glamorous soccer teams, clash in an unlikely top-of-the-table duel Saturday determined to prove they belong at the head of the Premier League.

Mike Walker, new manager of leaders Norwich, claims both his team and second-placed Coventry have been given a rough deal by the media and sees the match

as an opportunity to convince the doubters they are genuine title challengers.

"We are up there on merit. We are not up there because we've been lucky and it's about time certain sections of the media started treating us a little more fairly," said Walker.

"It's been the same old story: We do well but don't get the credit," moaned Walker, who took over during the close season from Dave Stringer.

"The same applies to Coventry. They have scored some excellent goals, have tremendous pace and look solid at the back. If it was Manchester United playing like that then everyone would be raving about them."

Norwich travel to Coventry with a three-point lead after nine matches on a club record roll of five straight league wins.

Coventry are unbeaten in their last four games, but their two defeats this season have both been at home.

Coventry striker Robert Kosar is eagerly awaiting the confrontation with the club where he launched his career.

"It's nice that Norwich and Coventry are at the top. I think people get a bit fed up with seeing the same old faces up there and we have shown in the last two weeks we are worth our place," he said.

Of the usual pre-season favourites, only Manchester United have run into form with five wins and a draw from their last six games which has lifted them to fourth, five points behind Norwich.

They should continue their challenge at home to Queen's Park Rangers, a point behind them but struggling after three draws in their last four games to maintain their impressive start to the season.

Ailing champion Leeds, languishing in mid-table without a win in their last five league games, have high hopes of ending the disappointing trend at home to Everton, who suffered two demoralising defeats in the last week.

Gullit to make first league appearance for Milan

LONDON (R) — Unsettled Dutch star Ruud Gullit is expected to play his first league game for AC Milan at Sampdoria Sunday after being left out of the first three, a victim of the champions' embarrassment of foreign riches.

Reports from the Milan camp are that coach Fabio Capelli will include Gullit and revert to his trusted Dutch trio, with Marco Van Basten and Frank Rijkaard, for their first serious test of the season.

Gullit, unhappy at not being guaranteed a first team place, dropped himself from the Dutch team which sorely missed his talents in their shock 2-1 loss to Norway Wednesday, possibly fearing it could be used as an

excuse for Capello to continue to leave him out.

But he is expected to play on the right of midfield, leaving recent match winner Daniele Massaro to partner Van Basten in attack as Milan's three new foreign acquisitions, Jean-Pierre Papin, Dejan Savicevic and Zvonimir Boban all sit out Sunday's game.

In contrast to the overstocked Milan, Arsenal, Sampdoria will be without captain Roberto Mancini, suspended following a sending off in last Sunday's away win against Udinese.

Juventus will probably stay with Englishman David Platt, scorer of a late equaliser against Genoa last week, for their home game against an AS Roma side

still deprived of the injured German Thomas Haessler.

Paul Gascoigne, who made his long-awaited debut for Lazio with a goal against his former club Tottenham in a friendly Wednesday, remains a doubtful starter for Sunday's home game against Genoa.

Gascoigne still looks far from ready for league soccer, although Lazio coach Dino Zoff will not make any decision until Friday afternoon at the earliest.

German league Bayern Munich, boosted by the successful return last week of World Cup captain Lothar Matthaus, but struggling with other injuries, seek revenge when they visit Borussia Dortmund Friday.

Bayern, unbeaten this season

and holding a one-point lead at the top, were knocked out of the German Cup by fourth-placed Dortmund after a penalty shootout two weeks ago when Bayern libero Olaf Thon was sent off.

Dortmund's Danish international Flemming Povlsen, who was involved in the incident which led to the German international's sending off, knows the Bavarians will be highly motivated.

"Thon and other players have threatened me with revenge. At least I have been warned," Povlsen said.

Bayern have injuries to defender Roland Grahammer, Brazilian striker Mazinho and midfielder Christian Ziege. Midfielder Mehmet Scholl is also suspended.

Party host's nightmare faces IAAF chief

HAVANA (R) — A party host's nightmare faces IAAF international athletics chief Primo Nebiolo this weekend.

Nebiolo's International Amateur Athletic Federation (IAAF) decided last year to stage the eight-team World Cup next two months after the Barcelona Olympics.

But what they intended to be a celebratory of a momentous athletic year is fast becoming a wake with less than a dozen Olympic champions opting to attend the sport's three-day end-of-term party starting Friday.

The most prominent of the Barcelona gold medalists is men's 100 metres champion Linford Christie, who as British team captain had always planned to run in Havana.

At one stage the tantalising prospect of a race between

Christie and world champion Carl Lewis was raised but the American finally decided he would wait until the new year for a big-money clash with the Briton.

Despite Lewis' absence, the 100 metres one of the classic events with Namibia's Olympic silver medalist Frankie Fredericks representing Africa and former world record holder Calvin Smith running for the United States.

But elsewhere fields are desperately thin with only a sprinkling of quality performers.

Ethiopia's Derartu Tulu, who was finally victorious after a wonderful duel with South Africa's Elena Meyer in the Barcelona women's 10,000 metres final, is one of these, running in competition for the first time since the games.

"I'm going in with an open

mind," Tulu said. "We have all come to win. We have all got shoes and shorts. It's only when we are coming down the final straight that one of us will know that she will win."

Cuba's Olympic high jump champion Javier Sotomayor, competing for the Americas, was similarly cautious.

"I'm not over-confident," he said. "Competing in Cuba is an honour because I'm in front of my crowd."

Sotomayor jumps against the defending World Cup champion and former world record holder Patrik Sjoberg of Sweden, who is in the European team.

"I can jump 2.35 which will be nine centimetres further than Sjoberg three years ago," Sotomayor said.

Ironically Nebiolo's moves to make athletics a fully professional sport will probably lead to the demise of one of his cherished competitions.

With a few exceptions, such as Tulu, the Barcelona champions have been busy cashing in on their gold medals by competing on the lucrative European circuit.

Wary in both mind and body after a year which stretched for some back to the northern hemisphere indoor season in February, the world's elite simply want to rest.

IAAF officials concede there is little space for the cup in an increasingly crowded calendar, which now includes bionical World Championships.

"No decision has been made yet," said one official. "But where can we fit the cup in?"

HOROSCOPE NOT RECEIVED

THE BETTER HALF. By Harris

"New diet strategy!"

JUMBLE. THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME by Henri Arnold and Bob Lee

Unscramble these four Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

KEROP
YOCEV
THINEW
ARUSSE

When horses had it, it was much less dangerous.

Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

Answer here:

(Answers tomorrow)

Yesterday's Jumbles: SEIZE CABIN DISMAY BAKING
Answer: When words are superfluous, it will usually take the place of speech—A KISS

THE Daily Crossword by Frank R. Jackson

ACROSS
1 Calcium oxide
3 Serene
9 Fumbled in speaking
14 Humdrum
15 Medicinal plant
16 Pine-grained chalcid
17 Numerical prefix
18 Sad about
19 Those not of the clergy
20 Bread
23 Frequently, poetically
24 Long, long time
25 Swift's forte
29 Sketch
31 Figures expert
34 Happening
35 Blow a horn
36 Social group
37 Bakery item
40 Roadhouses
41 Top-drawer
42 Excite
43 Consumed
44 Farm measure
45 Tim alloy
46 Fortis
47 Pouch
48 Polynesian plant
56 Gasconade
57 Destroy
58 Gather
59 Oakley
60 Head by family
61 Confronting
62 Legatese
63 — off (irate)
64 May or barber
65 Juich

DOWN
1 Plunder
2 Move slowly
3 Measure out
4 Noted periods
5 Bottle for serving wine
6 On high
7 Bread unit
8 Office note
9 Honour greatly
10 Once more
11 Forsaken child
12 Diminutive suffix
13 Susan of TV
21 Rich cake
22 Acts of courage
25 Rich brown
26 — garden
27 Coast with tin
31 Slog
32 Signs a contract
29 Lorna —
30 Loose-living gent
31 Slog
32 Belt
33 More proficient
35 Norse god
36 Corn field
37 Measure out
38 Sped
39 Build
44 Subeides
45 Hurt
46 Norse gods
47 Group of rooms
48 Line, e.g.
49 Hindu princess
50 Be agitated
51 Tricky move
52 Tour
53 Gambler's town
54 "Fatna" Hines
55 Fencer's blade
56 Scrooge word

GOREN BRIDGE

WITH OMAR SHARIF & TAMAR HIRSCH
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USE JUDGMENT, NOT ROTE

Both vulnerable. South deals.

NORTH
♠ A J 8
♥ J 8 3
♦ Q J 8 4
♣ K J 6

WEST EAST
♠ 7 2 ♠ K 4
♥ 9 7 2 ♥ A 10 8 5
♦ 10 7 2 ♦ 9 6 5
♣ 10 7 4 3 ♣ A Q 9 8

SOUTH
♠ Q 10 9 6 5 3
♥ K 4
♦ A K 3
♣ A 5 2

The bidding:
South West North East
1 ♠ Pass 2 ♠ Pass
2 ♠ Pass 4 ♠ Pass
Pass Pass

Opening lead: Two of
By and large, man is a lazy animal. Blessed with the most advanced brain in the animal kingdom, Homo sapiens is more apt to react automatically than resort to reason. Here's a simple illustration of our point.

Despite 14 points and a perfectly balanced hand, North could not jump to two no trump because of weakness in the unbid major. When South rebid spades over the tempo-

rising two-diamond response, North chose the suit game.

West led a low heart. Declarer played the three from dummy in a flash ("Second hand low," goes the adage), and East made a superb defensive play by inserting the ten. Declarer took the king and tried the trump finesse, losing to the king. Now East completed an excellent defense by underleading the ace of hearts to West's queen. The club shift was automatic, and two tricks there for the defense was declarer's death knell.

Instead of playing by rote to the first trick, declarer should have reasoned along these lines. As long as West can be kept off lead, the contract is safe—sooner or later declarer can take a club discard on dummy's low diamond. The opening lead marks East for the ace of hearts—an underlead of that card at trick one on this auction would be highly unusual.

Therefore, all declarer need do to break the enemy communications is to insert the table's jack of hearts to the first trick, forcing East to win the ace. Declarer can win any return, take the spade finesse to deny West entry and then, after drawing trumps, discard a club and score up another game.

Peanuts

SO IF YOU THINK I'M GOING TO PAY FOR A WORTHLESS TICKET, YOU'RE CRAZY!

YOU WERE SUPPOSED TO FLY ME TO HOLLYWOOD, AND WE NEVER GOT OUT OF THE BACK YARD!

I'M NOT GIVING YOU A PENNY!

"ACE AIRLINES" LAYS OFF CHIEF PILOT.

Andy Capp

EYE, MUM, TAKE CARE

TCH, SHE ALWAYS MAKES ME UP—COULDN'T YOU ASKANCE FOR HER TO COME WHEN I'M OUT?

Mutt'n'Jeff

THE MUTTS WERE LUCKY TO GET A GOOD COOK AND HOUSEKEEPER LIKE YOU, DAWN!

YOU BETCHA!

WHAT CHA MAKING NOW DAWN?

PANCAKES!

YOU PUT CORN KERNELS IN PANCAKES!

SURE! POPCORN KERNELS!

MAKES THE PANCAKES TURN OVER THEMSELVES!

IMF chief warns against interest rate cuts, recommends expenditure restraint

WASHINGTON (R) — The head of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) has warned it would be a critical mistake for global policymakers to slice interest rates in a headlong effort to spur economic growth.

"Some will tell you that it could be safe now to relax monetary discipline and so give a boost to activity, because inflation has been subdued, if not quite defeated," Managing Director Michel Camdessus told the annual meeting of the IMF and World Bank.

"But this would be the most serious mistake we could make today," he said.

His remarks seemed to fly in the face of the U.S. administration, which has spurred the Federal Reserve to cut rates to get the U.S. economy going as President George Bush fights for his political life in a tough reelection bid.

Treasury Secretary Nicholas Brady, who also addressed the gathering of economic officials from more than 170 countries, defended the U.S. approach, arguing that high rates inhibit productive investment.

He told the meeting of policymakers that high interest rates reduce the practical use of

money, tying it up in very safe havens in banks.

"When interest rates remain high for whatever reason, the returns on investment stay sterile in the banking system," Mr. Brady said.

In examining the currency upheavals of recent days, Mr. Camdessus said they reflected the inability of large countries to live within their means, putting vast burdens on monetary policy to keep economies afloat.

In addition he said the United States and Europe had been working at cross-purposes, with Germany increasing rates to fight off inflationary pressures while the United States had been cutting rates to get its economy moving.

The real global culprit, Mr. Camdessus said, was the fact that countries, including the United States, Germany and Italy, have been stacking up huge deficits rather than tightening their belts and facing reality.

"I urge prompt action to ensure speedy and lasting fiscal consolidation in the United States and Germany," he said, adding: "I would also recommend firm fiscal action in other European countries, most notably Italy."

He said the countries should concentrate on reducing budget expenditures, although they should be strong enough to take the politically difficult step of raising taxes in order to bring about an improved balance.

"The main emphasis should continue to be placed on expenditure restraint but increases in revenues will also be necessary in several countries," he said.

This runs directly counter to the Bush administration stance, where tax increases have become political dynamite.

But Mr. Camdessus argued that credible action to reduce deficits would improve confidence, lower inflationary expectations, and produce a downward adjustment of long-term interest rates.

"All these would, in time, more than offset any short-term (economic) contractionary impact," he said.

The IMF's call for tough re-

form measures in the world's wealthiest countries comes as policymakers attending the annual meetings have been trying to assess the impact and meaning of the currency upheavals that have shaken Europe and brought into question attempts by the region to further unify.

The United States, which seemed to be left out of the European troubles, has found itself under fire for pursuing policies that conflicted with those of Germany, adding strains to the monetary system and helping set the stage for a speculative binge in the currency markets.

This has led to finger-pointing among countries and sharp exchanges between officials because of the strain of the currency crisis, although in recent days there has been an apparent cooling of tempers.

The hickering among the largest powers and the currency crisis has relegated the emerging



Michel Camdessus

states of the former Soviet Union and poorer countries to the back burner at the IMF gathering.

Mr. Camdessus, in his remarks, said that while vast problems still hamper the switch from communism to capitalism in eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union, there are reasons for optimism.

"There is reason to believe that these early signs of a functioning market economy will spread quickly," he said.

Currency unrest firms Germans' support for mark

BONN (R) — With money markets in chaos and the European dream slipping, the Germans' deepening love affair with the Deutschmark is tempting politicians to cash in on this unique form of bank-note nationalism.

The number of Germans preferring the mark to a common European currency climbed last week to 72 per cent — far higher than ratings for the Maastricht treaty, Chancellor Helmut Kohl or just about anything else in politics here, an opinion poll published Wednesday showed.

This solid support for the mark, whose current strength is straining Europe's exchange rate mechanism (ERM) to the limit, led some conservative politicians to announce this week they might form a "DM party" to campaign against a monetary union.

"The Maastricht treaty is taking the mark away from the German people unnecessarily," Manfred Brunner, a former senior EC official in Brussels leading the new movement, told Reuters.

"The mark stands for the Germans' post-war identity, their achievements, their ability to pay for Germany's prosperity," said the former chief aide to EC Commission Vice-President Martin Bangemann, who left his job last week after urging Bonn to hold a referendum on closer European union.

"There is a very big majority in Germany for Europe, but not this kind of Europe," he said.

The Germans' emotional tie to

the mark, one of the few symbols of national pride left after Hitler's discredited patriotism, flags and anthems, has risen with its value to rival concern about immigration as a political issue.

After Britain and Italy left the ERM last week, the popular daily Bild listed new bargains from twined to chianti and swooned: "You beautiful mighty mark make our lives cheaper."

Munich's Sueddeutsche Zeitung coined the word "geldkrieg" (money war) to describe the "Germans-versus-the-others" atmosphere of last week's currency turmoil.

The opinion poll on Europe published in the newsweekly Stern showed only 32 per cent of those surveyed supported the Maastricht treaty as it now stands.

The single currency outlined in the treaty is so unpopular here that Mr. Kohl did not even mention it in a television statement calling for further European integration after France's paper-thin "yes" vote in last Sunday's referendum.

"I can't imagine he can win votes with it in the 1994 general election campaign," a policy strategist in Mr. Kohl's own Christian Democratic (CDU) Party said of the monetary union.

Mr. Brunner — still a member of Mr. Kohl's coalition partners, the Liberal Free Democratic (FDP) — said Bonn's main parties were driving anxious Germans to the far-right by their

unanimous support for quick and thorough European integration. The Republicans and other lesser-known nationalist parties, which have been gaining ground as racist attacks on immigrants mount, are the only groups that buck the pro-European front and loudly defend the mark as a symbol of German strength.

"Many people who actually don't want to vote for the Republicans think they have no other choice," said Mr. Brunner, who recently joined forces with a fellow Bavarian politician who ridiculed the planned ECU currency as "esperanto money."

Mr. Brunner declined to name the other politicians involved in his plan for the "DM party" and said they would only go ahead and launch the group if the main parties did not react to their challenge and reject the Maastricht treaty.

Mr. Kohl plans to introduce the treaty in parliament on Oct. 8 and expects it to be ratified by the end of the year.

Although the Stern poll showed the far-right supporting the mark, the strongest with 91 per cent, growing pride in the mark echoes through statements from all main parties.

The news magazine Der Spiegel, whose cover this week shows dynamic sticks made of two-mark coins about to blast the EC's 12-star symbol to pieces, quoted an unnamed official of the Bundesbank as calling the Italian lire "confetti money."

Air France, Air Canada seal trans-Atlantic link

PARIS (R) — Air France said Wednesday it had sealed a strategic alliance with Air Canada that will increase the number of flights between the two countries and extend each airline's global reach.

The tie-up, which involves no cross-shareholding, was the latest chapter in the shake-out of the world airline industry, reeling from slack demand and large losses.

It was also an example of the French and Canadian carriers' aggressive search for partners, and another in a growing list of alliances spanning the lucrative trans-Atlantic route.

Air France said in a statement the link-up would enable the firms to expand services between France and Canada, increase their access to new markets and propose new services to clients.

By coordinating flight schedules, the two airlines will cut the time it takes passengers to transfer between flights.

Air France will expand its services to North America. Montreal-based Air Canada will be able to do the same in Europe, Africa, the Middle East and Asia, using as a hub the Charles de Gaulle airport outside Paris.

The airlines will also coordinate their cargo business, in which Air France is a world leader.

The head of Air Canada, Hollis Harris, said Air France would become his firm's privileged partner in Europe.

Last month Air Canada and UAL Corp's United Airlines forged a commercial alliance, also without equity participation.

Air Canada has proposed a merger to its domestic rival Canadian Airlines and is leading a

\$400 million bid for U.S. carrier Continental Airlines.

For its part, Air France has taken a 37.5 per cent stake in Belgian airline Sabena S.A.

Along with the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, France's flagship carrier has bought a 40 per cent shareholding in Czechoslovak Airlines and has agreed to work with Germany's Lufthansa in the area of hotels.

Europe's largest airline, British Airways PLC, already has ties with a North American carrier, USAir, while KLM Royal Dutch Airlines has a stake in U.S. carrier Northwest Airlines.

The French and Canadian firms, keen to take advantage of the restructuring of the world airline business, are spreading their wings despite large losses.

Irish central bank tightens exchange controls

DUBLIN (R) — The Irish central bank, defending the punt in the current European currency turmoil, Thursday tightened its foreign exchange controls.

A bank spokesman said: "We suspended any swap activity by non-residents in Irish punts unless they receive explicit exchange control approval in advance."

In Brussels, the European Commission said that it was checking on the legality of the controls.

A commission spokesman said Ireland still enjoyed some exemptions from EC laws aimed at creating a single market by the end of this year. "Obviously we will be checking," he said.

The Irish central bank has intervened on three days in the past week to support the punt when the currency hit its intervention floor of 2.6190 marks in the ERM, Europe's system of semi-fixed exchange rates.

The punt is also trading at parity and beyond with the pound sterling for the first time since Ireland cut its ties with the British currency and joined the European Monetary System in 1979.

This could pose major problems for Irish firms as up to one third of Ireland's exports go to Britain.

Irish Prime Minister Albert Reynolds has called on EC governments and central banks to coordinate their efforts.

Spain attacks speculators with capital controls

MADRID (R) — The Bank of Spain Wednesday declared all-out war on currency speculators by reintroducing emergency capital controls to support the ailing peseta.

The ruling requires domestic banks to match loans to foreign investors by depositing an equal sum, interest-free, with the bank of Spain — effectively reintroducing exchange controls that the government abolished in February.

Financial analysts said this meant that lending money to potential speculators was now prohibitively expensive and dealers said they were caught by surprise.

"The bank wants to stop people having pesetas to play with," said Darren Williams, economist at brokers UBS Phillips and Drew in London. "I guess it's using a different weapon of attack because other methods (of helping the peseta) have proved not to work."

The Spanish currency devalued by five per cent in the European Community's exchange rate mechanism (ERM) last week at the same time as the British pound and Italian lira left the system for now.

The peseta, along with the French franc and the Irish punt, have come under fresh pressure this week from speculators betting on further falls.

"Even if the French tensions die down, the peseta is still vulnerable," said one London analyst who asked not to be named. "The bank is buying time

and squeezing speculators."

France raised interest rates Wednesday to help the franc but analysts said Spain appeared to want to resist the same action.

The Bank of Spain held its key interest rate at 13 per cent at a money market tender on Wednesday.

Analysts were divided over exactly what signals the bank's move would send to the market.

"The smart investors will be scared that the Bank of Spain is having to do such extreme things to support the currency," said the London analyst.

"It's a siege economy," said another.

But William Ledward, European economist at Nomura Research Institute in London, said the move did not smack of desperation.

"It isn't a panic move," he said. "It's a wise precaution because these people have got to be beaten."

On Tuesday the Bank of Spain intervened to buy the peseta when it sank to around 71.50 per mark and Mr. Ledward said it still had large reserves.

Analysts said the reintroduction of capital controls was a temporary measure to meet a short-term problem — similar to Sweden's recent spectacular increase in its marginal lending rate to 500 per cent.

Spain lifted all exchange controls on Feb. 1 to allow the free movement of capital, people and goods ahead of the launch of the EC's single market on Jan. 1, 1993.

OECD: Too soon to say Third World debt crisis over

PARIS (R) — Banks and governments may be getting the upper hand over the Third World debt crisis but it has not gone away and poor countries will have to fight hard to win more funds in coming years, the OECD has said.

"The debt problem has certainly not been resolved nor has it at all gone away in any global sense," the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) said in its annual aid report.

The Paris-based think-tank for the world's richest countries noted that while the crisis had eased in Latin America, where most of the major debtors are, the problems for sub-Saharan Africa had worsened.

Since government lenders were now looking much more closely at issues such as human rights and democracy when deciding which Third World countries to help, political reforms must continue.

At the same time, the Third World will need to persevere with economic liberalisation to attract private finance, since a big increase in official aid is unlikely in the near future.

The OECD praised bank and government creditors for reaching landmark deals with certain Third World debtors.

"There have been clear improvements in a number of countries, which are now implementing better economic and structural adjustment policies, assisted by debt agreements. Nevertheless, the situation remains critical for many others," it

noted.

The OECD applauded the debt deals reached with commercial banks by several Latin American countries — including Mexico, which set off the Third World debt crisis a decade ago — saying these had played a part in turning around their economies.

"With Mexico and Chile having largely put their debt problems behind them, and Argentina as well as Brazil moving in the same direction, there is now a significant flow of finance back into Latin America," it said.

Against that, "the low and declining volume of private flows (to sub-Saharan Africa) remains a cause of continued concern."

The Paris Club of government creditors has helped to bring a solution to the debt problem closer, notably by offering more favourable rescheduling terms since December 1991 to countries deemed serious about reforming their economies.

More important, the OECD said, is the Paris Club's new policy of offering a deal on a country's total debt stock — in effect, a promise to write off at least half of its debt — on condition that economic adjustment plans are adhered to.

The OECD estimated total Third World debt at the end of 1991 at \$1.48 trillion, up slightly from \$1.44 trillion in 1990.

Partly as a result of the various debt deals, debt service payments made by Third World countries fell to \$150.9 billion in 1991 from

\$159.1 billion in 1990, on the OECD's latest calculation.

Funds received by these countries from all sources — governments, banks, multilateral agencies, financial markets — rose to \$137.5 billion in 1991 from \$137.2 billion in 1990.

The Third World thus paid back more than it got from the rich world in 1991, though the OECD put a very gloss on that.

Funding in 1991 was higher than the record level of 1990, it said, adding: "This situation is particularly heartening in view of the economic and political situation prevailing in 1991."

And its study reeled off a list of factors that could have depressed overall funding — notably slow growth in the OECD countries; the Gulf crisis and the break-up of the Soviet Union.

It found little evidence that the countries of central and eastern Europe and the republics of the former Soviet Union had siphoned off more of the development funds available.

On the other hand, the transformation of the ex-communist states saw aid from eastern Europe collapse to about \$1 billion in 1991, less than a quarter of the levels of the late 1980s.

Total lending from non-official sources rose in 1991 to \$55.4 billion from \$52.6 in 1990, but the OECD said official flows from its member countries and the multilateral agencies would remain the main source of Third World development funds.

Indian stocks turn bullish

BOMBAY (R) — A favourable monsoon and a fresh round of economic reforms have revitalised Indian stock exchanges and helped erase memories of major financial scandal, stock brokers and market analysts said.

They said the latest move to open stock exchanges to foreign institutional investors put the government's economic reforms back on track and had turned market sentiment bullish.

"The monsoon has been excellent. It will greatly help our agriculture-based economy and spur the demand for industrial goods," Bombay Stock Exchange (BSE) President G.B. Desai said.

Mr. Desai said the government was expected to reduce tax on company profits to 45 per cent in the 1993-94 budget (April/March) to be announced in February from the current 51.75 and to 40 per cent the next year.

"All these point to a buoyant market," he said.

A \$1.2-billion scandal involving brokers and bank officials erupted in April this year, sending share prices crashing and ending an unprecedented boom on Indian stock markets.

Investors scared away by the scandal are coming back and share prices, which crashed after hitting record highs in April, have since recovered 33 per cent of their losses and are 75 per cent higher than at the start of the year.

The 30-share index of the BSE, largest of India's 21 stock exchanges, stood Friday at 3,383.62 points compared to 2,921.53 a

month ago and against 1,876.62 a year ago.

"The scam is history, except for those who are stuck with tainted shares," Mr. Desai said.

A market analyst said the market still looked a little jittery because many companies faced twin problems of high interest rates and a demand slump.

He said half-yearly results to be announced in the next few weeks would be subdued, though he expected demand to pick up from November.

He said the coming months would see hectic activity in both primary and secondary markets as companies planned to raise up to 50 billion rupees (\$2 billion) from the public.

This month the government will launch the second phase of a privatisation programme, raising 35 billion rupees (\$1.3 billion) from the sale of stakes on 20 public sector companies.

Finance Minister Manmohan Singh has said foreign institutional investors will be able to buy up to 24 per cent of the shares of Indian companies, opening markets to direct foreign investment for the first time. But foreign investors will have to pay a 40 per

cent capital gains tax if they sell within a year.

Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) Chairman G.V. Ramakrishna said he expected up to \$2 billion from foreign investors in the next 12 months.

"The Indian stock markets are growing and vibrant," he said. "The SEBI is taking measures to streamline the working of stock exchanges to cope with new challenges."

Merchant bankers are not that optimistic. "The euphoria about foreign funds coming into the market is a little misplaced," said Nalin Mehta, chairman of Lila Investments, merchant bankers and portfolio managers, adding that the fundamental structure of India's markets needed drastic changes.

"Foreign investors are used to paperless, smooth and speedy transactions while in India even fortnightly settlements of share deals are not carried out in time," Mr. Mehta said.

"One has to wait for three months before they get their money. Indian stock markets are like a soap opera, each episode ending in suspense," he pointed out.

JORDAN TIMES

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LONDON EXCHANGE RATES

LONDON (R) — Following are the buying and selling rates for leading world currencies and gold against the dollar at midsession on the London foreign exchange and bullion markets Thursday.

Tourists rates will differ from those quoted below.

One Sterling	1.7105/20	U.S. dollars
One U.S. dollar	1.2451/56	Canadian dollar
	1.4900/10	Deutschmarks
	1.6790/820	Dutch guilders
	1.3000/15	Swiss francs
	30.70/74	Belgian francs
	5.0720/300	French francs
	1260/1265	Italian lire
	120.40/45	Japanese yen
	5.5600/800	Swedish crowns
	6.0100/300	Norwegian crowns
	5.7800/900	Danish crowns
One ounce of gold	348.75/349.25	U.S. dollars

Cinema Tel: 677420

CONCORD

SHARIHAN...IN LOVE & FEAR

(Arabic)

Shows: 3:30, 6:15, 8:30, 10:30

Cinema Tel: 634144

PHILADELPHIA

THELMA and LOUISE

Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:15, 8:30, 10:30

Special shows for children on Thursdays and Fridays at 11:00 a.m.

THE GOONIES

Cinema Tel: 675571

Nabil Al Mashini Theatre

at 6:00 p.m. daily

Shahrazad and Sinbad play

A quiet comedy for all members of the family (adults and kids). Prior reservation is needed.

The next show is: (Tan' Waqaymeh)

Cinema Tel: 625155

AHLAN THEATRE

Nabil & Hisham presents

The Political Satire Play

Welcome... New World Order

Show starts at 8:30 p.m.

El Gaz goes bankrupt

GDANSK (R) — El Gaz, one of Poland's biggest private companies, has been declared bankrupt, court officials have said. El Gaz, which grew in seven years from a scrap metal dealership into a multi-faceted company which owned a small airline and a television studio, was declared bankrupt by a regional court in the northern city of Gdansk.

The court upheld a local court's bankruptcy declaration last July after a complaint by a supplier which did not receive payment. Court officials said El Gaz had debts of more than 700 billion zloties (\$52 million).

El Gaz, based in Gdynia on Poland's Baltic coast, had turned owner Janusz Leksztyn, 30, into one of Poland's richest men. He started El Gaz in 1985 by collecting scrap metal which he resold. But the company diversified into a supplier of gas heaters and plastic window frames and doors.

Mr. Desai said the government was expected to reduce tax on company profits to 45 per cent in the 1993-94 budget (April/March) to be announced in February from the current 51.75 and to 40 per cent the next year.

"All these point to a buoyant market," he said.

A \$1.2-billion scandal involving brokers and bank officials erupted in April this year, sending share prices crashing and ending an unprecedented boom on Indian stock markets.

Investors scared away by the scandal are coming back and share prices, which crashed after hitting record highs in April, have since recovered 33 per cent of their losses and are 75 per cent higher than at the start of the year.

Serbs launch air attacks on Bosnian town

JAJCE, Bosnia (R) — Serb warplanes are bombing this besieged mountain settlement in what residents fear could be a "softening-up" tactic before a fresh Serb offensive.

Set at the confluence of the Pliva and Vrbas rivers, Jajce has strategic importance in any designs to link up the Serb-populated Krajina to Croatia and Serb-held territory in Bosnia.

The Chetniks (Serb fighters) want this town... We are like a fishbone in their throat," Kadric Muhjudin, the local Bosnian army commander, told Reuters at the height of repeated air raids Wednesday.

A local hospital was hit several times in the raids.

Two Bosnian soldiers were also wounded as intermittent sniper, mortar and artillery fire claimed civilian victims throughout the day.

The bombing raids on Jajce, a town of about 15,000 mainly Muslims and Croats before the Bosnian war, ended a three-day lull in fighting.

The town has been cut off from the outside world since April except for an unpaved mountain track which supply vehicles travel by night.

A Serb offensive broke Bosnian lines around Jajce in mid-August, pushing defenders back about 6 kilometres.

Air attacks on Jajce began on Aug. 12, in support of the Serb offensive. Residents said the fresh bombing raids could signal the beginning of another organised assault.

Once a former tourist destina-

tion with a dramatic waterfall, the town has been extensively damaged by Serb bombing and shelling.

Meanwhile, the co-chairmen of talks to bring peace to former Yugoslavia will fly to the Bosnian city of Banja Luka Friday because of concern over reports of increased tension there, a United Nations spokesman said.

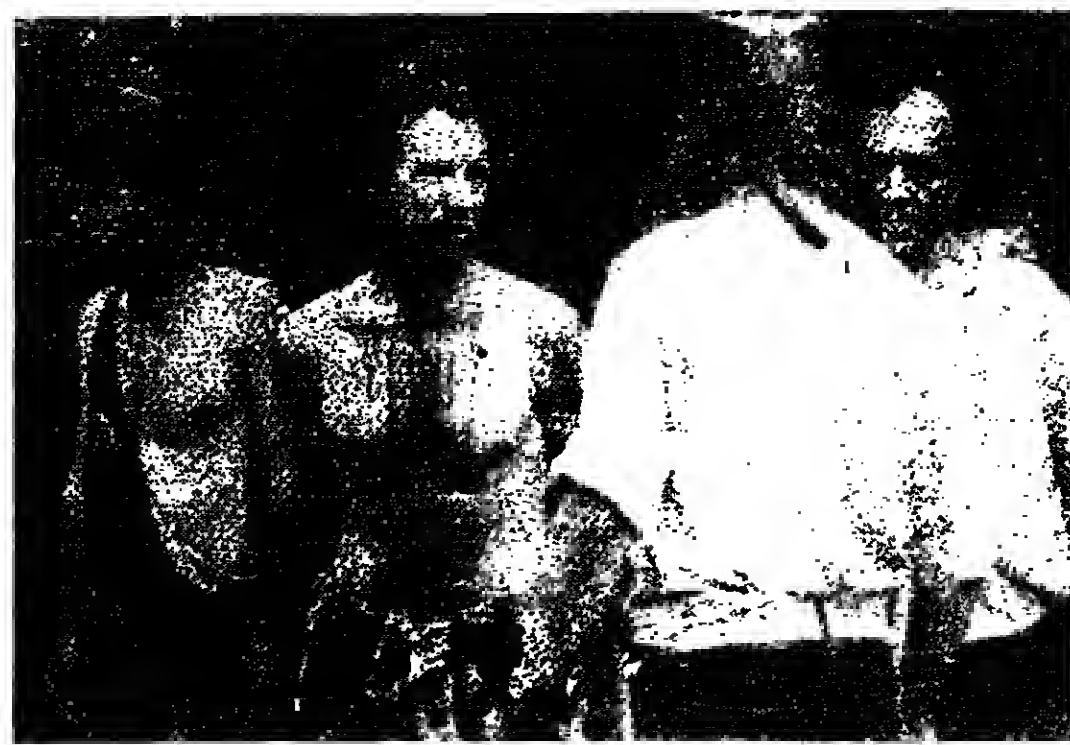
Spokesman Fred Eckhard said the reports indicating the buildup of an "ethnic cleansing" campaign in the Serb-held city in northwestern Bosnia-Herzegovina had just reached co-chairmen Cyrus Vance of the United Nations and Lord Owen of the European Community.

"The co-chairmen are deeply concerned about reports which have just reached them from the Banja Luka region indicating a buildup of tension, bomb incidents and intimidation with the potential threat of violence and the development of ethnic-cleansing campaign," said Mr. Eckhard.

He declined to go into detail about the reports, but he noted that the International Committee of the Red Cross and the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees were among the international agencies that have representatives in the area.

Neither agency would comment immediately.

Mr. Eckhard said Mr. Vance and Lord Owen had summoned Geneva-based representatives of rump Yugoslavia and Bosnian Serbs and urged them to press for immediate steps to reduce tension in the area.



Muslim fighters captured in Bosnia are questioned by a Serb soldier

He said the reports were of a "disturbing" trend of "a number of specific incidents... in the last few days," but that Mr. Vance and Lord Owen didn't want to prejudice what was happening.

"In view of the urgency of the situation, the co-chairmen have decided to fly to Banja Luka tomorrow (Friday)," Mr. Eckhard said. "There they will assess the situation on the ground and speak to representatives of the local communities and humanitarian agencies."

Yugoslav President Dobrica Cosic, through his Geneva representative, "pledged cooperation with the co-chairmen in their efforts to get to the root of the matter and to try to establish the facts."

Mr. Vance talked to Radovan Karadzic, leader of Bosnian Serbs, who indicated he would fly to Banja Luka himself to join the co-chairmen and make his own assessment.

Meanwhile, at Serb headquarters fighters complained bitterly

that a U.N. plan to keep tabs on Serb artillery will help the enemy. Out in the field, other Serb soldiers vowed to bide their time rather than hand them over to U.N. peace monitors.

At the Serbs' 1st Krajina Corps Base, southwest of the government town of Gradacac, Maj. Gen. Bosko Kelecic said his men were digging in for a winter campaign along a 900-mile (1400-kilometre) front despite U.N. plans "to put all our weapons under their control."

Mandela: Summit with De Klerk is in balance

JOHANNESBURG (R) — ANC leader Nelson Mandela said Thursday the chances of a peace summit between him and President F.W. De Klerk Saturday still hung in the balance.

Speaking after a meeting with Spanish Ambassador Mariano Ucelay, Mr. Mandela told reporters: "I briefed the ambassador regarding the summit Saturday. But the question of it being held still hangs in the balance."

"There are a lot of loose ends that still need to be tied up. We would like the summit to be held after all the issues have been tied up properly."

Sources from both sides said the key issue is how the government responds to the ANC's demand for the release of political prisoners.

The two top negotiators for the government and ANC resumed talks Thursday in an attempt to break the impasse preventing the summit, which would be the first meeting between Mr. Mandela and Mr. De Klerk since mid-May.

"A great deal of importance has been attached to the summit. I do not want it to fail," Mr. Mandela said.

"I hope Mr. De Klerk will cooperate with me to sort out the problems that still remain," he added.

He said that at the end of such a summit "we would like to say we have laid the basis for the resumption of (democratic) negotiations."

"It would therefore be tragic if it is regarded as a failure. I am preparing for the summit," Mr. Mandela said at the ANC headquarters in Johannesburg.

The negotiators, Roelf Meyer for the government and Secretary General Cyril Ramaphosa for the ANC, had thrashed out a compromise Tuesday night but the cabinet and the ANC's policy-making national working committee

tee failed to endorse it during separate meetings that lasted throughout Wednesday.

The ANC committee and key government ministers were standing by Thursday in case of a breakthrough in the latest talks. The ANC has demanded the release of hundreds of political prisoners, in particular three guerrillas convicted of killing whites during the anti-apartheid struggle.

Robert McBride, a mixed-race ANC guerrilla, was sentenced to life imprisonment for planting a bomb in a beachfront Durban bar popular with police and soldiers in 1985. Three white civilians were killed.

Two blacks, Mzondeleli Nondula and Mthetheli Mchabe, also received life sentences for a landmine blast which killed three white farmers close to the Zimbabwean border in the northern Transvaal in 1985.

Pretoria said that at a special session of the white-dominated parliament to October it would introduce legislation on an amnesty for all offenders regardless of political affiliation.

Mr. De Klerk invited Mr. Mandela to an urgent summit on the political violence in South Africa after soldiers of the ominously independent homeland of Ciskei massacred 28 ANC demonstrators at bisho on Sept. 7.

He said the deadlock to multi-party talks on the transition to democracy from white rule could not be broken until there was agreement on ways to tackle township violence.

The ANC walked out of democracy negotiations in June after 43 blacks were massacred at Boipatong township south of Johannesburg.

About 2,500 people have died in the past 12 months, mainly in turf battles between the ANC and Mangosuthu Buthe's conservative Inkatha Freedom Party.

France pledges 1,000 troops for U.N.

UNITED NATIONS (R) — French Foreign Minister Roland Dumas has formally pledged 1,000 troops as standby U.N. peacekeepers and encouraged the world body to intervene in conflicts when ceasefires broke down.

In a speech to the U.N. General Assembly during its annual debate, Mr. Dumas carried forth a promise made by President Francois Mitterrand at a Security Council summit last January.

"I would like to confirm today, from this rostrum, France's commitment to make available to the secretary-general, at any time, a contingent of 1,000 men for a peacekeeping operation," he said.

"I hope that this example will be followed, for our organisation must be sure of being able to react quickly and forcefully as soon as a conflict threatens or flares up."

A standby force was proposed by U.N. Secretary General Boutros Ghali in his major agenda for peace report in May but so far only France has given any definite commitment. The U.N. chief also suggested intervention before a conflict flared or use of a specially-trained force when ceasefires broke down.

Mr. Dumas appeared to back this premise saying "there are cases where we must intervene even though the ceasefire is neither complete nor lasting."

"There are cases where, to impose, respect... we must have clear rules of engagement binding on everyone."

He said this was particularly important for France, which now had contributed more peacekeepers than any other country, 6,000 serving in Croatia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Cambodia, Lebanon, the Western Sahara and El Salvador. Eight U.N. peacekeepers have been killed since the beginning of the year.

His speech contrasted with that of British Foreign Secretary Douglas Hurd, who spoke for the 12 European Community countries Tuesday. Mr. Hurd stressed preventive diplomacy, urging the United Nations to become more adept at resolving disputes before they erupt into conflicts rather than stretch its peacekeeping resources.

Mr. Dumas, in his speech, also lashed out at nations who were behind in paying U.N. dues, saying it was "unacceptable on governments as it is on peoples, to set an example."

Italian director honoured

PARIS (R) — Distinguished Italian film director Michelangelo Antonioni was appointed commander of the French Order of Arts and Letters. Culture Minister Jack Lang presented the award saying Antonioni, maker of such landmark films as L'Avventura, Red Desert and Blow-Up, had revolutionised Cinematic Language. Antonioni, 80, looked moved but remained silent during the ceremony. Dogged by illness, he has not made a feature film since Identification Of A Woman in 1982. Despite retaining his patrician good looks, he looked frail and walked with a pronounced limp. To mark his birthday, the city of Paris has organised a retrospective of all Antonioni's films, which broke with the Italian postwar neo-realist school to explore themes of alienation and frustrated human relationships. His films are regularly cited in critics' lists of the best movies ever made.

Jilted lover in tug-of-love over pet tiger

AMSTERDAM (R) — A 58-year-old Dutchman is taking his former lover to court to try to gain access to the couple's pet tiger, a Dutch newspaper reported. The popular daily De Telegraaf said Piet Cerfontaine, 58, had not seen Malaysia the tiger since splitting up with Anneke Van Ham, 57, in June after a relationship of 11 years. "I love Malaysia, but she cost me a lot of money and everybody should know that," Mr. Cerfontaine told the newspaper.

Onlookers join in rape of jogger

JOHANNESBURG (R) — A white jogger who appealed for help from bystanders as a black man raped her was in turn attacked by two onlookers, police said. "The 25-year-old woman from Kyalami (north of Johannesburg) appealed for help from two black men who were watching. They ignored her," police spokesman Eugene Opperman told Reuters. "After the man had finished raping her, the two watchers also took turns to sexually molest her." Mr. Opperman said the two men were later arrested at a migrant worker's compound but the original rapist had disappeared.

Manila to auction Marcos jewellery

MANILA (R) — The Philippines plans to auction \$20 million worth of jewellery once owned by former first lady Imelda Marcos and hopes her notoriety will attract buyers. Magtanggol Gunigundo, head of the Presidential Commission on Good Government formed to recover the alleged ill-gotten wealth of the Marcos family, said Wednesday that London auctioneers Christies had offered to sell the jewellery. "Christies said they could command the best price in Geneva during November," Gunigundo told a news conference. "With the alleged notoriety of the reputed owner, the sale could attract many buyers. We expect competition for the items to be fierce," he added.

Clinton adds U2 to his music list

CHICAGO (R) — Democratic presidential candidate Bill Clinton may like Elvis and the saxophone, but he's still got time for Irish rock music. Mr. Clinton met members of the Irish rock group U2 here and a spokesman said they talked about America's relationship to Ireland and presidential debates. Mr. Clinton had talked to the band members over the summer during a radio call-in show in Waco, Texas. U2 were in Chicago for a concert, and the meeting of more than a half hour took place in the band's hotel suite.

WORLD NEWS IN BRIEF

Bonn requests Security Council seat

UNITED NATIONS (AP) — Germany joined a chorus of calls for a permanent seat on the powerful U.N. Security Council and also offered to contribute troops to U.N. peacekeeping forces. The suggestions reflect Germany's new more prominent role in foreign affairs, departing from the reserved policies after the Nazi era. In his debut appearance at the U.N. General Assembly, Foreign Minister Klaus Kinkel of Germany noted that debate on reforming the 15-nation Security Council was now under way. "We will not take the initiative in this respect, but if a change in the Council's composition is actually considered, we too shall seek a permanent seat," he said. Mr. Kinkel has said previously that if Japan pushes for a Security Council seat, Germany would too. Japan's Foreign Minister, Michio Watanabe, made a veiled appeal for a seat in his speech to the General Assembly Tuesday. Mr. Kinkel has said the present makeup of the Security Council reflects the international order at the end of World War II and should be restructured.

Georgia threatens war in Abkhazia

MOSCOW (R) — Georgia threatened Thursday to start a "real war" if its demand for south Russian armed groups to be withdrawn from the rebel region of Abkhazia by Friday was not met. "The (ruling) State Council has decided to start a wide-scale combat action to drive all illegal north Caucasian armed groups (from Abkhazia). Then a real war will start," spokesman Ramon Chelidze said. Mr. Chelidze, deputy head of the ruling State Council's press service, was speaking by telephone from his office in the Georgian capital Tbilisi. Hundreds of people have been killed in fighting between Abkhaz rebels and government troops. The conflict has been aggravated by the presence of armed volunteer groups from the mountain regions of south Russia across the Caucasus range.

Russian troops attacked in Tajikistan

MOSCOW (R) — Feuding groups in the Central Asian state of Tajikistan have attacked Russian troops in order to steal their weapons, Commonwealth television said. The television did not give details of the attacks. It said joint groups of local police and Russian servicemen were to start patrolling some cities in the former Soviet republic and would be given the right to shoot if necessary. Hundreds of people have died in recent clashes between supporters and opponents of ousted President Rakhmon Nabiyev, forced to resign at gunpoint earlier this month. Acting President Akbar Iskandarov Monday warned leaders of feuding groups they would be forcibly disarmed if they did not stop fighting by Friday. On Tuesday, the commander of a Russian army division in Tajikistan said he had ordered his troops to withdraw to barracks from guard duty at vital government installations because they were caught between rival warring groups.

Bonn charges ex-spy-master with treason

BONN (R) — Germany charged legendary Communist spy-master Markus Wolf with spying and treason Thursday for running at least 12 agents against Bonn during the cold war, including one who brought down former Chancellor Willy Brandt. The federal prosecutor's office said Mr. Wolf, who headed east Germany's chillingly efficient spy network from 1953 to 1986, had up to 600 agents in west Germany. The long-awaited charge focused on 12 west Germans it said Wolf personally directed and paid to betray military and political secrets to east Berlin. "As head of the HVA (Main Intelligence Administration), the accused was responsible for all espionage conducted by that agency against west Germany," the office said in a statement. "The exact total of espionage cases in which the accused was personally involved... has not been established." Mr. Wolf, called "the man without a face" because western spy agencies hardly knew what he looked like until 1978, fled to Moscow before Germany reunited in 1990 but returned a year later to give himself up. He is currently free on bail. A dapper 69-year-old, he has been writing his memoirs, appearing on television talk shows and refusing to testify at trials of former colleagues to avoid prejudicing his case.

U.K. minister fights for political life

LONDON (R) — Scandal-plagued cabinet minister David Mellor was fighting for his political life Thursday after saying the issue of his resignation was a struggle between Prime Minister John Major and Britain's powerful tabloid press. The future of Mr. Mellor, facing a barrage of calls to quit over a sex scandal and paid-for holidays with wealthy Arabs, was being reviewed Thursday by the influential 1922 Committee of "Back-Bench," or non-ministerial, members of parliament. Mr. Mellor, dubbed "minister of fun" for his arts, sports and media portfolio, put his case Wednesday night in television interviews making clear his resignation had been refused by Mr. Major. "I think it has become a trial of strength between the tabloids and the prime minister," said Mr. Mellor. "The question is whether it is the prime minister or tabloid editors who decide who should serve in the British cabinet." National Heritage Secretary Mellor said he behaved foolishly during his extra-marital affair with actress Antonia De Sancta but objected to sustained newspaper probing which unearthed the vacations, one with the daughter of a PLO (Palestinian Liberation Organisation) official.

Bonn denies 'mini-Europe' report

BONN (R) — Chancellor Helmut Kohl's spokesman denied reports Thursday the German leader had agreed with French President Francois Mitterrand to forge a "mini-Europe" because of opposition to the planned European union.

Spokesman Dieter Vogel said of the report in the Die Welt newspaper: "These claims are invented and have no basis in fact."

A Bonn official who asked not to be named had earlier denied the report to Reuters.

Die Welt said the two leaders agreed during Mr. Kohl's lightning visit to Paris Tuesday to forge ahead with integration only for Germany, France and the Benelux states.

It quoted what it called reliable sources in Brussels saying the two men had decided on a slimmed down Europe because of opposition to Maastricht in Denmark

and Britain.

Mr. Vogel said in a statement: "Speaking about the result of the referendum in France, the chancellor stated last Sunday that the issue now was to implement the treaty on the European Union on Jan. 1, 1993 as planned."

"The German government will work at the special summit of the European Council in October to have the ratification procedures in all member states moved ahead promptly to reach this goal."

"As the strong economic nucleus within the EC, France, Germany and Benelux states should according to this plan complete the monetary and political union by 1997," it said.

"Other states in the Community would have the opportunity to follow as soon as they felt able."

It said this arrangement would be presented in public as a "two-speed Europe" but would in fact

amount to a split of the 12-member Community.

Mr. Kohl has said he wants a special EC summit on Oct. 16 to come up with additional texts that will further define parts of the Maastricht Treaty that only barely survived a cliffhanger referendum in France Sunday.

In a televised statement, he stressed a possible cutback in the Brussels bureaucracy and steps to assure citizens they would not lose their national identities in a united Europe.

He did not mention the planned monetary union, a sensitive topic here since almost three-quarters of all Germans want to keep the mighty mark.

Germany's Bundesbank has been intervening heavily on foreign exchange markets to defend the French franc against speculators trying to wedge it out of Europe's embattled Exchange Rate Mechanism (ERM).

Chirac reimposes authority over party

PARIS (R) — Neo-Gaullist leader Jacques Chirac, the best-placed conservative to succeed Socialist Francois Mitterrand as France's president, reimposed his authority over the Rally for the Republic Party (RPR) after a revolt in its ranks.

The party's ruling National Council, meeting at Mr. Chirac's request, confirmed its approval of his leadership late Wednesday by 487 votes to 19 with one spoiled ballot.

The vote showed party leaders still backed Mr. Chirac as candidate to stand in a presidential poll scheduled for 1995 when the ailing Mitterrand, who will be 76 next month, is not expected to

seek re-election.

Opinion polls suggest that Mr. Chirac, 59, can beat any left-wing opponent except European Commission President Jacques Delors, a possible Socialist contender.

Mr. Chirac called the RPR council vote after a crisis provoked in the party by two of its key figures, Philippe Seguin and Charles Pasqua, who campaigned against ratifying the Maastricht Treaty to European union which Mr. Chirac backed.

Although 152 council members were not present for the vote, many presumably to demonstrate lack of confidence in Mr. Chirac, the fact he was backed by more

than 70 per cent of them seemed to consolidate his position firmly.

The French public approved the European Community's Maastricht Treaty in a national referendum Sunday by a watertight vote of 51.05 to 48.95 per cent.

Many RPR militants and sympathisers voted against the treaty on the grounds that it would deprive France of much of its freedom to act independently.

Some political analysts said Mr. Seguin and Mr. Pasqua both harboured personal presidential ambitions which they would have declared at later dates if they had managed to dislodge Mr. Chirac's hold over the RPR.

Clinton, Gore say Bush is pandering to the rich

VALDOSTA, Georgia (R) — On a rainy night in Georgia, Democrats Bill Clinton and Al Gore accused President George Bush of pandering to the rich who, they said, ought to pay more taxes to create jobs for the working class in America.

During a bus tour that took the two men through Georgia's poorest areas, they ridiculed the economy's performance under Mr. Bush.

And on arrival in Valdosta late Wednesday night, they got even tougher. Mr. Clinton, governor of Arkansas, described Mr. Bush as an eastern elitist, educated at a Connecticut prep school and Yale and sent off to start a family business with "\$300,000 from his daddy."

Mr. Bush had earlier referred to Mr. Clinton as a "failed governor of a small state," and mentioned his presidential rival's Oxford education.

"One day I'm a redneck, the next I'm an Oxford man," said Mr. Clinton. "Where does he get off looking up to me as an Oxford man?"

He called on Mr. Bush to "stand up and fight" in a debate. The two campaigns are at an impasse over a debate format and there is no sign of a compromise with fewer than six weeks to go until the Nov. 3 election.

Gore, a Tennessee senator whose father was also a senator, said Mr. Bush and Republicans only respond to "the wealthy and powerful, the privileged few."

In an animated performance in Valdosta, he contrasted Mr. Bush

and Vice President Dan Quayle with a cabal desperate to retain power.

"Let me tell you something, in some countries that don't have democracy, a little small group will get control of the power and they'll bang on and run the country into the ground, and they'll resist with everything they've got and nobody can get them out of there," Sen. Gore said.

"Not to this country. In this country the people are in charge. And when you have a record of performance as absolutely sorry as Bush and Quayle's record has been, the American people are going to clean them out of the White House," he said.

Mr. Clinton wants to tax the top two per cent of income earners — those making more than \$200,000 a year — and use the money for public works programmes and job training.

"When I say the wealthy should pay their fair share, I don't mean to stop people from making money," Mr. Clinton told a rain-soaked rally in Tifton.

"I want people to make money not by cutting deals and turning money by putting people back to work. You can make a tonne of money if you'll invest in our people again," he said.

Mr. Bush insists that any plan for increasing taxes on the wealthy will eventually filter down as well to the middle-class who find Mr. Clinton's message attractive.

Driving through Georgia's peanut country, Mr. Clinton found sentiment running against a free-trade agreement with Mex-

ico. Peanut farmers told him the agreement, which Mr. Bush has negotiated with Mexico and Canada but must be approved by Congress, would allow cheaper peanuts to flood into the United States from the south, wiping out their businesses.

Mr. Clinton has said he is reviewing the details of the proposed North American Free Trade Agreement. In Georgia, he said he wants "to give Americans the same chances to make a living that people in other countries have."

"I would support an economic policy, in short, that puts the American people first," he said in Parrott, the "peanut capital of the world."

In Fort Worth, Texas, Mr. Quayle courted voters Wednesday by passing out chocolate chip cookies and blasted Democratic presidential candidate Bill Clinton for flip-flopping on key issues.

During a campaign swing through Texas, Mr. Quayle made an impromptu stop at a mall where he bought a dozen cookies and passed them out to startled shoppers.

In an earlier speech to local Republican leaders, Mr. Quayle said Mr. Clinton's changing views on important issues reflected "the triumph of convenience over truth."

"Gov. Clinton says he is the candidate of change, but he is truly the changing candidate," Mr. Quayle told more than 400 supporters.

"It's one thing to take a political risk in the hope of helping your country, but it's another matter to change your position to avoid political risk in the hope of helping yourself," he said.

Mr. Quayle, listing what he termed Mr. Clinton's "top ten flip-flops," pointed to the Arkansas governor's draft status.

He said that while Mr. Clinton had once denied ever receiving induction notice or a draft deferment during the Vietnam War, he had recently acknowledged both.

"Even though he has promised to release documents that would clarify what happened, he still refuses to come clean to the American people on this important matter," Mr. Quayle said.

Mr. Quayle charged, in addition, that Mr. Clinton had changed his mind on issues ranging from the Gulf War to taxpayer funding of abortion, and cited what he said were the Democrats' shifting stances on middle class tax cuts, health care and welfare reform.

In a separate development, the Washington Post said Thursday President Bush may have been present at a January 1986 meeting at which cabinet members voiced opposition to secret arms sales to Iran, according to a classified memo.

The paper quoted informed sources as saying the memo from former Secretary of Defence Casper Weinberger is buried in 1,700 pages of notes written by Mr. Weinberger which are being reviewed for use in his upcoming trial on charges related to the Iranarms scandal.

It contradicts Mr. Bush's statements that he was never present when either Mr. Weinberger or former Secretary of State George Shultz objected at White House meetings to selling weapons to Iran, then at war with Iraq.

Mr. Bush has repeatedly dismissed questions about what role he played in the controversial deal in which the profits from the arms sales were diverted to help the contra rebels in Nicaragua when Congress had barred formal U.S. aid.

The Weinberger memo would confirm earlier testimony from Mr. Shultz placing Mr. Bush at the Jan. 7, 1986 meeting in the White House Oval Office, where both Mr. Shultz and now Mr. Weinberger recalled that they were against the sale.

Mr. Weinberger wrote that he objected on legal grounds while Mr. Shultz argued against the scheme on grounds it would appear the weapons were being traded to help free American hostages held in Lebanon by Iranian-backed groups.

Mr. Bush has said he never objected to the arms sales because he never heard the objections of Mr. Shultz and Mr. Weinberger, who lost the argument.

Mr. Bush said last month he has "nothing to explain" about his role in the scandal. "Maybe I would have had a stronger view," he told the Washington Post in an August 1987 interview. "But when you don't know something, it's hard to react... we were not in the loop."